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ABSTRACT

This publication presents fundamental ideas necessary for effective teaching of word recognition as part of the reading process. Chapter 1 defines and discusses word recognition techniques. The second chapter reviews word recognition techniques and discusses how they aid the reader in unlocking words. Exercises and suggestions for teaching word recognition skills and subskills are presented in chapter 3. Chapter 4 presents an overview of the place of phonics in the reading program. Chapter 5 offers selected exercises for teaching phonics and related skills. A listing of word recognition skills by reading grade levels and a check list for use in evaluating the child's knowledge of word recognition skills are presented in chapter 6. A brief lesson plan for teaching word recognition skills when basal readers are used is outlined in chapter 7. An informal reading inventory is described in chapter 8, and chapter 9 contains summary comments on word recognition skills. (LL)

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# TEACHING WORD RECOGNITION SKILLS IN GEORGIA SCHOOLS

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Division of Curriculum Development and Pupil Personnel Services
Office of Instructional Services
Georgia Department of Education

Jack P. Nix, State Superintendent of Schools
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## PREFACE

The varied work recognition techniques are taught well in many classrooms. Some teachers, however, need to know more about these skills and how they should be taught in order to instruct children effectively in their use. This bulletin has been prepared primarily to serve those who feel inadequate in this area.

The overwhelming majority of primary and intermediate teachers organize basal reading around reading texts. For that reason, much—but not all—of the discussion of the teaching of word recognition in this bulletin centers around programs in which basal readers are used. Suggestions in this publication, however, should be of value to teachers of reading in all types of organizational settings and with varying types of instructional materials.

This bulletin is an extensive revision of *Teaching Word Recognition Skills in Georgia Schools*, first published in 1960. The general format of the earlier publication has been retained. One change in this bulletin is an attempt to classify some terminology of linguistic scientists as it relates to word recognition. Another modification is the elaboration of certain points included in the earlier bulletin. These changes grew from suggestions made by teachers who have used the earlier publication. The Georgia Department of Education distributed more than 50,000 copies of *Teaching Word Recognition Skills in Georgia Schools,* mostly to Georgia teachers and prospective teachers.

The job of teaching the work recognition skills is that of many teachers on many different grade levels. For that reason, this bulletin should be of interest to upper elementary, junior high and high school teachers as well as to primary teachers.

This publication presents fundamental ideas necessary for effective teaching of word recognition. An effort has been made to emphasize that word recognition is only a part of the reading process. As desirable as it would have been, time and space did not permit a complete treatment of all phases of reading instruction.

Persons assisting on the current publication include Robert L. Aaron, Juanita Abernathy, Ollie Coward, John Paul Jones, George McNinch, Gloria Michael, Richard Rystrom, Hazel D. Simpson and Yancey Watkins. The writer wishes to express appreciation to all persons listed above for their assistance and to the many Georgia teachers who gave him feedback on the first edition. Special appreciation goes to Ollie Cowart and John Paul Jones for the many hours they put into helping to get the manuscript ready for publication.

I. E. Aaron

CHAPTER 1

# WORD RECOGNITION IN THE READING PROGRAM

Reading is a complex process, one in which many different skills, abilities and understandings are involved. This bulletin is devoted primarily to those skills, abilities and understandings that are considered a part of word recognition. Word recognition techniques are vitally important, though they alone do not equip the reader for the complex task of reading.

A good reading program provides opportunities for developing all of the important skills, abilities and understandings needed for maturity in reading. No one group of skills is overemphasized or neglected. As the teacher teaches word recognition skills, he also gives instruction on comprehension, interpretation, oral reading, work-study and all other important reading skills. Recognizing words, though not the end product sought, is an important and necessary means to the ends of understanding and appreciation.

The mature reader, knowing thousands of words at sight, may read an entire book without having to figure out a single word. This large reading vocabulary, however, did not grow entirely through the learning of words as wholes. In fact, only a very small percentage of the words a mature reader recognizes instantly were learned as wholes. Most instantly recognized words were originally learned through the use of a combination of the word recognition skills. Subsequent meetings of the words in print moved them into the reader's sight vocabulary. The mature reader continues to use the various word recognition skills when he encounters unfamiliar words and, sometimes, for pronunciation and varied meanings of known words.

A mature adult reader may note this sentence, "The burbot splashed water on the fisherman." If he does not know the pronunciation or meaning of *burbot*, he uses his word recognition skills to unlock the word. If he is reading silently and needs only the meaning, he reads the entire sentence to see if he can find a clue to the meaning of the one unknown word. He notes that a burbot can splash water on a fisherman, and he likely would conclude correctly that a burbot is some type of fish. He reads the next sentence, "The fish then disappeared behind the boat." Now he is positive of its meaning. Sometimes, though, he needs to consult the dictionary because meaning may not be obvious from the context.

To illustrate the many combined word recognition skills that may be involved in unlocking the word *burbot,* the assumption will be made that a dictionary is not available, and the context will not assist initially in giving the meaning and/or pronunciation. In *burbot* the reader first breaks the word into syllables. Using the "double consonant" generalization (when two consonants come between two vowels, the division is usually made between the consonants), he decides

upon *bur* as the first syllable and *bot* as the second. Next he guesses that the first syllable will start with the sound ordinarily represented by the letter *b* and that *u* will be controlled by the *r* that follows it—making the first syllable *ber*. The second syllable begins with the same sound, that usually represented by *b*. Reasoning that the second syllable is likely unaccented (the first syllable is usually accented in words of two or three syllables), he concludes that the vowel in the second syllable will have a schwa sound. The final sound of the syllable will be that usually associated with the letter *t*. He now has a guess at the pronunciation of the word. Does he have the meaning. He does if he already knows what *burbot* means, but he still must get the meaning from the context or a dictionary if his thinking or pronouncing *burbot* does not trigger previous knowledge of the word.

Hopefully, no reader would need to go through the long and drawn-out procedure sketched above, but it shows the possibilities for recognizing the word. A study of the process followed above reveals the ultimate possibility of using one syllabication principle, two phonics principles, one accent principle and sound-letter association of consonants. This is a complicated process for unlocking a single word like *burbot*. However, these skills are taught one at a time and are gradually used in combination and in more complex words. Ample practice leads the child to use them almost automatically when he needs them.

## THE WORD RECOGNITION SKILLS

Word recognition is made up of many sub-skills. The good reader uses not one but a number of different techniques of attacking unknown words. He tries techniques that appear appropriate for the particular word he is attacking. Initially he may learn a small group of sight words as wholes and then, by use and study of these sight words, learn other techniques of recognizing words.

Reading methodology books, basal reading series and other systematic treatments of word recognition categorizes these skills in various ways. A grouping pattern often followed is initial sight vocabulary, use of picture and context clues, word structure clues, phonics and dictionary use. The word recognition skill categories used in this bulletin, in addition to the building of sight vocabulary, are picture clues, context clues, adding endings to words without changing the root word, adding endings to words with a change in the root word, compound words, contractions, prefixes, suffixes, syllabication, phonics and dictionary use.

The intent of this publication is to consider word recognition as a meaning process in which words may or may not be pronounced. Though comprehension is often considered as a separate, large cluster of skills, recognizing words also involves meaning, and in this sense, it can be classified as an aspect of comprehension. At no point is it the intent of the publication to imply that pronunciation of words is all there is to reading, or even to word recognition.

The child who pronounces words but cannot derive meaning from them is not a reader. On the other hand, the child who is weak in knowledge and use of word recognition skills is blocked in comprehending the printed page.

Numerous terms are used to refer to the techniques being discussed in this pamphlet. They include word recognition, word identification, word attack, word perception, word analysis, unlocking words and code breaking. The term "word recognition" is used here to refer both to instant recognition of known words, and to obtaining meaning, with or without pronunciation, for unknown words. The term "word identification" is sometimes used to refer to unlocking unknown words, while "word recognition" applies only to instant recognition of known words. No such distinction is used in this publication; word recognition will cover both situations. Each term is defined in the glossary.

## RESPONSIBILITY FOR TEACHING THE WORD RECOGNITION SKILLS

Teaching word recognition is a school-wide responsibility. The last group of word recognition skills, that of dictionary use, is introduced to children who are being instructed at third to fourth grade level in reading. This does not mean, however, that teachers above third grade levels have no responsilibities in teaching word recognition. Upper elementary, junior high and high school teachers must give some attention to instruction in these skills for the following reasons.

Children should be instructed in reading skills appropriate to their reading levels. (Many children placed in fourth or higher grades are reading at lower levels and, thus, should be instructed in reading at the lower levels.)

Children whose overall reading achievement levels are equal to or above the grades in which they are placed sometimes show weakness in word recognition.

Children need to use previously learned skills, and many of these skills must be expanded and used in more complex words, sentences and paragraphs.

Children use word recognition skills in reading the general and special vocabularies in the subject-matter field, such as in history, science, geography and mathematics.

Children needing remedial help in junior high and high school frequently need to improve in word recognition skills.

## SCOPE OF THE BULLETIN

This bulletin focuses on one important aspect of reading instruction, that of word recognition. Comprehension and other equally important skills are treated only insofar as that treatment is needed to develop ideas about word

recognition. Though it would have been desirable, space did not permit a discussion of all skills involved in the reading process.

The place of word recognition in the reading program has been the topic of Chapter 1. Chapter 2 includes an overview of all of the word recognition skills except those of phonics and closely related skills. The phonics and related skills are discussed in Chapter 4. Immediately following Chapters 2 and 4—in Chapters 3 and 5—are suggestions for the teaching of each of the skills listed in the preceding chapters. Chapter 6 discusses the sequential development of these skills. Initial placement of the word recognition skills, as presented, is in terms of reading difficulty levels rather than absolute grade levels. Next, Chapter 7 presents an example of a lesson in basic reading instruction in which word recogition instruction fits into developmental reading programs in which basal series are used. Because of the importance of instructing children in materials easy enough for them to succeed yet difficult enough to challenge them, Chapter 8 suggests an inventory for determining suitable difficulty levels of reading materials. The final chapter lists some main ideas about the teaching of the word recognition techniques. For the reader who has a question about the meaning of common terms used in referring to word recognition, a list of terms is included in the appendix. The appendix also contains several references for persons who wish more information on word recognition.

CHAPTER 2

# THE WORD RECOGNITION SKILLS

To teach word recognition skills effectively, the teacher first needs to understand clearly the skills involved. This chapter reviews the word recognition techniques and discusses how they aid the reader in unlocking words. Phonics and closely related skills are given very brief treatments since two later chapters are devoted to them.

## SIGHT VOCABULARY

The term *sight vocabulary* has two meanings—(1) words recognized instantly and (2) words taught as wholes. The mature reader has a sight vocabulary of tremendous size and may read the morning newspaper or a book without having to pause even once to unlock an unknown word. In keeping with the first meaning, teachers at all levels work toward helping the learner enlarge his sight vocabulary. Most of these instantly recognized words, however, were not taught initially as whole words. This point may be illustrated with the word *burbot*, from the example in Chapter 1. *Burbot* may be recognized instantly by the reader at this point, but several of the word recognition skills may have been employed originally to obtain the meaning and pronunciation of the word.

A second meaning of sight vocabulary is learning words as wholes. In initial reading instruction, teachers often attempt very soon to teach children a few words as wholes. During the process of developing this small stock of sight words, the teacher also works on skills such as recognizing like and unlike sounds in words and like and unlike objects, letters and words. This auditory and visual discrimination instruction usually comes before, during and after the development of the sight words that will serve as a base for teaching some of the phonics and structural analysis skills.

Teachers who use this approach involving early development of a small group of sight words initially taught as wholes, vary in numbers of words they teach. The initial stock may vary from approximately 40 to 100 words. When a basal series is serving as a core part of the reading program, as in most developmental reading programs in the primary grades, the words taught are usually those suggested in the very beginning of the series—as in the pre-primers of some series. The purpose of teaching these words early in the child's learning of the reading process is to assure his having some known words that may be used in learning phonics and structural analysis skills. The teacher does not hold in abeyance all word recognition instruction until a certain number of words are taught. For example, as soon as the child learns one word beginning with the letter *d*, as *dog*, the child has the base for learning to associate the letter *d* with the sound heard at the beginning of the word.

As indicated, these initial words are often taught as wholes, the vocabulary is taught through use of experience charts or stories, through labels on objects such as furniture and clothes, through activity notices on the chalkboard and through use of pre-primers. The pre-primers, usually three or four in number, contain a vocabulary totaling usually about 50 to 90 words. Each word is repeated in context many times. For most children, these repetitions are sufficient for them to master the small number of sight words needed as a background for continued word recognition instruction. Other word recognition instruction is interwoven with the teaching of this small stock of words.

Among the clues that help the early learner remember words taught as wholes are general configuration, length and letter order within the word. The teacher often asks children to look closely at a word to see if there are some things that will help them remember the word. The children may note that the word "has two *f's* in the middle and two *e's* on the end" (coffee) or "is long" (Washington). When the words are met in context, the context clue also assists the learner.

The debate about the "whole word" or "look-say" versus other approaches to beginning reading has been exaggerated. No widely used commercial materials advocate teaching all, or even very many, words in the beginning as wholes. What many basal series of readers do advocate is the initial teaching of a small number of words as wholes and the occasional teaching of other words as wholes when the child does not have the knowledge and skill to unlock the word for himself. Examples of the latter types of words would be *pneumonia* and *gnat* when the contest does not supply the needed clues and when the child does not know the sounds ordinarily represented by *pn* and *gn*. In programs advocating the teaching of an initial stock of sight words, it is not a matter of setting aside other instruction until this is accomplished; the instruction on other appropriate word recognition skills accompanies the teaching of these few words as wholes.

## PICTURE CLUES

Starting from the readiness stage in beginning reading, picture clues to meaning are used. The teacher may tell a story about a squirrel, without mentioning the name of the animal. At the end of the story he shows a picture of the squirrel and then asks what it is. In pre-primer reading, the pictures carry a great deal of the story, and at times, they give clues to new words. For instance, on the page on which the word *wagon* is introduced, a picture of a child riding a wagon may be presented. Use of picture clues prepare the child for later use of context clues.

More important than the use of pictures as clues to word recognition is their use to aid in building concepts and in creating interest. In materials designed for use in initial reading instruction, the picture often sets the stage for the few sentences of text, thus adding to the content of the story. Pictures accompanying the text also help the mature reader in developing concepts discussed in the selection.

## CONTEXT CLUES

One of the most rapid techniques for recognizing an unknown word is by means of context clues. The reader, when using this word recognition technique, gets a clue to the new word from the rest of the sentence or paragraph.

From the beginning of reading instruction context clues are useful to the reader. The child meets a sentence such as, "The elephant lifts the bucket with its trunk." Not knowing the word *elephant*, he reads the rest of the sentence for a clue. Only one thing he knows, an elephant, lifts objects with a trunk. Therefore, he guesses the word to be *elephant*, and he finds that it makes sense. Such clues become increasingly important as the child grows toward maturity in reading. Adults frequently use these clues to unknown words.

Context alone merely limits the meaning of the word. It must be used in conjunction with other word recognition clues since most situations are not limited to one possibility as in the example of *elephant*. For example, the reader meets the following sentence, "Mary, you should not run in the house; you should _____." The unknown word could be *walk, tiptoe,* or some other word with similar meaning. The letter *w* at the beginning of the unknown word would give an additional clue to the recognition of the word.

Context clues are very important for meaning in dictionary use. When the reader searches for a definition in the dictionary, he must select from among several possible meanings. The only way to determine which meaning fits is to put it into context to see if it makes sense.

Context clues may also be obtained from the word preceding the unknown word. Such words sometimes are referred to as structure words; they signal what is coming next. For instance, the child may encounter this sentence, "The girl went into the store." Not knowing the word *store*, the reader would assume that the word *the* coming before the unknown word signaled a noun, the name of something. The word *the* could also precede some other part of speech, such as an adjective, but not in the case of the sentence cited, since only one word followed *the*. Such clues are broad ones in that they merely limit the possibilities to words that fit the sentence structure; other clues must be utilized.

Of the several categories of structure words, those of most help as clues to word recognition are those signaling nouns (such as articles—*a, an,* and *the*; possessive pronouns—*his, her, my, your*; and numbers—*one, two, three*, etc.) and those signaling verbs (such as *is, am, have, had, was*, etc.).

## ENDINGS WITH NO CHANGE IN THE ROOT WORD

One of the earliest ideas children learn about the structure of words is that sometimes an ending such as *s, ing, es*, or *'s* may be added to a word to change

the meaning of the word. These added endings are taught first in words in which no change occurs in the root word when the ending is added, as in *car* changed to *cars, jump* changed to *jumped* or *jumping*. Included also in these inflected forms of words are *er* and *est* endings in adjectives and adverbs. The children are also taught to locate the root within the larger word, as *jump* in the word *jumping*.

Each of these elements is a meaning element and, when added to a word, changes its use. They carry a great deal of meaning. The word *boy* with the letter *s* added now means "more than one boy" instead of "one boy." The addition of *ed* to *look* changes the verb from present to past tense, as in the sentences, "I look at the book" and "I looked at the book." These elements, in linguistic terms, are called "bound morphemes" in that they are meaning elements that must be affixed to other meaning elements.

These words are called "inflected" forms of words. However, in some cases of inflection, to be discussed later, the root changes, as *dry* changed to *dried*. Several of the parts of speech are inflected, that is, the word form varies to show number (singular or plural), tense (present, past, future, etc.), comparison (positive, comparative, superlative), case, gender or mood. In reading, the child's concern in the early stages is primarily with those forms in which the root of the word remains unchanged. The teaching of these particular skills also occurs in grammar and in spelling.

In word recognition the teacher aims toward teaching the child to recognize the new word as a familiar word with an *s, ed, ing, 's, es, er,* or *est* added at the end. In the early stages of reading, the children will already know the meaning involved. For instance, the child says *car* when he means just one and *cars* when he means more than one; he also says, "I like to jump," "I am now jumping." and "I jumped yesterday." For most of the children the understanding is there; the teacher's job becomes that of helping the child to associate this change in word ending with meaning which he already has. If, however, the child does not use these inflectional ending in his oral language, the instructional task will likely be more difficult. The child who omits the sound represented by *s* in pronouncing *looks* may have difficulty in recognizing the word *looks*. In such instances, the starting point may be to begin with oral language.

A type of exercise to be avoided in working on location of elements in words is finding little words within large words. This should be done only when the little word is the root from which the larger one is made. Otherwise, the reader will often be misled, as in *soon (so* and *on)* and indeterminate (*in, deter, term, at, ate,* and *determinate*). So often the little word is not even related in sound or meaning to the larger word.

## ENDINGS WITH CHANGES IN THE ROOT WORD

In addition to an understanding of endings to words with no change in the root word, children must be taught a few principles about endings in which the root has been changed. The understandings usually taught include the following.

a. When a root word ends in a single consonant, the consonant may be doubled before adding *ed* or *ing*. (hopping) (Sometimes the teacher adds that the consonant is doubled when it follows a single vowel letter.)

b. The double consonant just before the ending gives a clue to the sound represented by the preceding vowel letter; the reader should try the short sound first. (hopping)

c. When a root word ends in *e*, the *e* may be dropped before adding *ing, ed, est, er,* or other endings beginning with a vowel. (hoping)

d. The single consonant just before the ending gives a clue to the sound represented by the preceding vowel letter; the reader should try the long sound first. (hoping)

e. When a root word ends in *y*, sometimes the *y* is changed to *i* before an ending is added. (dried) (This principle may be taught with the added point that the *y* usually changed to *i* when the *y* is immediately preceded by a consonant.)

f. When a root word ends in *f* (or *fe* in which the *e* is silent), the *f* sometimes is changed to *v* before adding an ending. (wolves)

Principles b and d above combine word structure with phonics. The first four generalizations may be considered as companion generalizations, though they are taught separately. An example should clarify this statement. The child meets the word *hoping* in his reading. Seeing a single consonant coming before the *ing*, he tries the long vowel sound. He knows that sometimes the *e* is dropped before an ending, and at the end of the process he recognizes the word as the known word *hope* with an *ing* ending. Next he encounters *hopping*. This time he guesses the short vowel sound for *o* because of the double consonant letters before the ending. He understands that sometimes the consonant is doubled before the ending.

These principles are usually taught by second and third grade difficulty levels. The children are also taught to tell the root word from which the longer word was made, as *dry* for the word *dried.*

## COMPOUND WORDS

By primer or first reader difficulty level, the child begins to recognize new words made up of two familiar words, as *cowboy* and *playhouse*. Later he learns to attack words in which he knows one of the words from which the compound word was made. Helping the child to see that the new word consists of two known words often is all the instruction necessary. A child may initially fail to recognize a compound word when the teacher knows that he would recognize each root word if it had been presented separately. Under such circumstances, the teacher may cover the second part with a 3 x 5 inch card and ask what the first part is, and repeat the process by covering the first part.

In the early stage of instruction in use of compound words, the words the child encounters are usually words he uses orally. Meaning is not likely to be a problem, once he says or thinks the word. The child also will likely know from his oral language pattern that each part of a compound word is accented the same as if the two parts were separate. The second accented syllable usually has a secondary accent. For example, both *cow* and *boy* in *cowboy* and both *grand* and the first syllable of *father* in *grandfather* are accented.

## CONTRACTIONS

Starting at pre-primer or primer reading level, the child is taught to recognize words in which one letter is replaced by an apostrophe, as in *don't* and *isn't*. At higher reading levels, he learns more complex contractions, such as *I'd* and *won't*. Most children readily learn contracted forms of words since their natural speech patterns involve contractions, as *don't*, rather than the more formal use of both words, as *do not*.

The reader will also encounter later an almost infinite number of contracted forms of verbs attached to nouns, as *Mary's* for *Mary is* and *Joe'd* for *Joe would*. Again, this is usually the way he talks, and he needs only see the connection between the written form and what he says. These are much more difficult to teach if the child's speech does not include the contracted form. A child who says, "Joe going to the store" rather than, "Joe's going to the store" is likely to need help on saying the sentence correctly before he can read it correctly.

In a noun-verb contraction involving *'s*, as *John's*, the context is likely to help the child distinguish between this type of contraction and the possessive form of a word, as *John's* in *John's ball*.

## PREFIXES

From the primary reading levels, children should be taught to recognize frequently used prefixes, as *un, re* and *dis*. Such instruction usually starts at second or third grade reading level and continues at higher difficulty levels.

Prefixes, like inflected forms of words, are affixed to a root word, and the prefix itself is a meaning unit. In linguistic terms, it would be called a bound morpheme—"bound" because it must be attached to another morpheme and "morpheme" because it is a meaning unit.

A word formed from a prefix plus a root is a derived form of a word rather than an inflected form. That is, a derived word, like *unhappy*, is a new word with new meaning rather than being an inflected form of a word that keeps its same basic meaning. *Unhappy* is the opposite of *happy*. *Look* and *looked* have the same basic meaning, but the *ed* added merely means it happened in the past. The word *looked* is an inflected form of a word.

## SUFFIXES

The addition of suffixes to a known word is taught to children as an aid to word recognition. This form of word structure usually is introduced at the second grade level and is continued into higher levels. Common suffixes taught include *y, ly, er* and *ness*.

As in the case of prefixes, suffixes are derived forms of words in that the addition of the suffix changes the word meaning. Adding *y* to *rain* changes the meaning from "rain" to "like rain"; adding *er* to *farm* changes the meaning from "farm" to "one who farms."

Again, the suffix is a bound morpheme in that it carries meaning but must be attached to another morpheme. Suffixes are not the same as inflectional endings, as *ed, 's, s* and *ing*. An inflected form of a word merely indicates a change of use—as tense, number, person, comparison, case, gender or mood. As indicated earlier, the adding of a suffix changes the word meaning itself.

## SYLLABICATION

How to divide words into their parts becomes important to word recognition when the child meets many words of more than one syllable. Usually these skills of syllabication are introduced at the second or third grade difficulty level. They are important skills used by children in attacking words of more than one syllable. A full discussion of the teachings involved in syllabication is given in later chapters along with discussions of phonics, because these skills are utilized mainly in conjunction with phonics in attacking multisyllabic words.

## PHONICS

Phonics, the relationship of sound to printed symbol, includes an important group of skills. Two later chapters are devoted entirely to phonics and related skills. For that reason these skills are not discussed here.

## DICTIONARY USE

Though dictionary use is considered a third grade difficulty level technique, readiness for dictionary use is started at earlier levels. This readiness includes such factors as learning the names and sounds of letters and alphabetizing. Simple picture dictionaries are used even at first grade reading level. Dictionary skills include the following.

- Alphabetizing (by single and multiple letters)
- Understanding the purpose of and using guide words
- Selecting the correct definition from among those offered
- Knowing how to open the dictionary efficiently
- Using the key to pronunciation
- Using diacritical markings
- Using pronunciation spellings
- Knowing and using accent marks
- Knowing how to decide the correct entry word in cases of words with prefixes and suffixes
- Using word origin comments included in the dictionary
- Using parts of speech markings included in the dictionary

With the exception of the last three of the above, these skills are usually introduced, at the latest, by the end of the third or beginning of the fourth grade difficulty level.

Dictionaries are quite different in format and in marking systems employed. In the early stages of learning to use the dictionary, the child can become confused by different diacritical marking systems in two or more dictionaries or glossaries. At a later stage of his development, having several different dictionaries in the classroom can aid the child in learning dictionary use.

Differences most often noted in recently published dictionaries concern use of the schwa symbol, the type of indication for short vowel sounds and the manner for showing accent. Some dictionaries use the schwa to indicate an indeterminate vowel sound only, whereas others may use it also to indicate the short *u* in accented syllables. In most recent dictionaries, the short vowel has no marking over the letter; in other words, the breve has been omitted. Some dictionaries now show the accent mark at the beginning rather than at the end of the syallable and the secondary accent mark at the bottom rather than at the top of the syllable. The teacher needs to be thoroughly familiar with the dictionaries and glossaries to be used in his classroom.

CHAPTER 3

# SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING WORD RECOGNITION SKILLS

The exercises presented here are illustrative of those useful in teaching the skills discussed in Chapter 2. They may give the teacher ideas for preparing her own teaching materials and exercises. Some offer suggestions directly to the teacher for developing materials or carrying out activities, whereas others are presented in the form of work addressed directly to the student. These latter exercises, which begin with directions to the student, may be used as models for teacher-prepared materials. No effort has been made to include exercises on all of the detailed skills and sub-skills. Many additional suggestions may be found in professional texts on the teaching of reading and in materials designed for use in developmental and remedial reading programs.

## SIGHT VOCABULARY

**Exercise 1** Instruct the child in materials easy enough for him to read with ease. (See Chapter 8 for a discussion of how to determine the appropriate instructional level.) Note during the first silent reading the words that are not known to the child. Then give special help on these words by calling the child's attention to any distinguishing characteristics in the words. Let him discover these characteristics for himself, giving only as much guidance through questions as is necessary.

**Exercise 2** Prepare sentences using words that have been difficult for children to remember. When a particular word is usually hard for a child, use that word in several different sentences, having the child read each one. A variation of this exercise is to use structure or service words (as *this, has, outside, since* and *where*) rather than those found to be difficult. Words may be taken from lists such as those by Dolch.

**Exercise 3** When frequently encountered words are difficult to remember, the child may record them in a word booklet. Time should be scheduled for him to review these words periodically. Some of the review time should involve reading teacher-prepared sentences containing words from the word booklet. New words should be added as they are needed, and old words should be removed when they are learned. Care should be taken to keep the list to manageable size in order to avoid discouraging the child by an oversized list. If the list becomes quite long, materials the child is attempting to read likely are too difficult.

**Exercise 4** If the child has extreme difficulty in learning a word, print that word in large letters on a tablet. Have the child trace the letters with his finger and say the word as he traces.

**Exercise 5** In order to help the child to learn words that have been difficult for him to remember, the teacher may use a "word matching" game. Words causing difficulty are printed on small cards, with two complete sets of words being prepared. Cutting a 3 x 5 card into thirds gives an appropriate-sized card. The child is given one set of cards and the teacher (or another child playing the role of the teacher) has the other. As the teacher places a card on the table, the child matches it from one in his set. He then pronounces the word, and finally uses the word correctly in a sentence.

**Exercise 6** Words to be taught as whole words in initial stages of reading, printed on 3 x 5 inch cards, may be placed in random order on a bulletin board, using thumb tacks to secure the cards. A feltboard or magnetic board may be used instead of a bulletin board if available. In the beginning, only two different words should be used. Two more words may be added as the first two are learned, and so on. Three copies of each word should be made. With several children participating, turns should be taken in reading the words, progressing in left-to-right order. As the child reads a word, he is given that card. If a child misses a word, he is taught the word at that time. The card is removed from the board, but the teacher keeps it and records the word and the child who missed it. When all cards are gone, the teacher then takes the missed cards and gives the child missing each one a second chance. If he pronounces the word, he is given the card. If he misses the word, the teacher reteaches. Whether he knows it or not after this instruction, the child is given the word to place in his pile of cards. Children missing the word at this point are likely not ready for this type of instruction. After all cards are distributed, children take turns in pronouncing the words on their cards and then making sentences using the words correctly. As a child finishes with a card, the teacher or leader takes up the card.

**Exercise 7** Print on 3 x 5 inch cards the names of objects in the room, such as *desk, chair, window, table* and *door*. Place these on the objects. From time to time, have the children review these words. Be sure to use these words later in sentences the children are to read.

**Exercise 8** Write activity notices each day on the chalkboard, and have children read them. An example is this one.

Mary will water the flowers.
Bill will feed the fish.
Benjy will be our host today.
Sue will be our hostess today.
Ann will pass out crayons.

**Exercise 9** Write experience stories, encouraging the children to help. An example follows.

We went to the principal's office.
Our principal is Mrs. Waters.
She told us to come in.
We went into her office.
She talked to us.
We went back to our room.

## PICTURE CLUES

**Exercise 1** Cut out pictures of several animals from old magazines or books. Mount pictures on cardboard. Ask the children questions in which they must identify the picture of the animal in terms of some characteristics peculiar to that particular animal. For example, the pictures may be of a squirrel, an elephant, a rabbit and a bird dog. Questions such as the following may be asked: Which is the picture of an animal that has a trunk? Which is the heaviest animal? Which animal hunts birds? Which animal climbs trees? Which animal has a short tail?

**Exercise 2** Cut out pictures of objects, animals or scenes the children will have difficulty in identifying. Mount pictures on cardboard. Discuss a picture, and then place just below the picture a 3 x 5 inch card on which the name of the object, animal or scene has been printed. Ask the child what he thinks the word is. Do the same for the remaining pictures. Some children may associate the spoken word with the printed symbol after a very few presentations, while others may not. Such a practice serves as a useful purpose for some children even though they may not add the words to their sight vocabularies. They are learning that the picture may give a clue to the printed word.

**Exercise 3** Cut out pairs of pictures which are related in some way, as a horse and a bridle, a man and a coat, and a dog and a dog collar. Mount pictures on cardboard. Put the pictures of the objects in one pile and the pictures of the animals in another. Ask the child to match the picture in one pile with its related picture in the other pile.

Another approach is to cut out pictures of places where animals live and pictures of the animals. Ask the children to match the animals with their homes, as a man and a house, a dog and a dog house, a horse and a barn, and a pig and a pigpen.

## CONTEXT CLUES

**Exercise 1** Watch for opportunities as the child reads to help him use context for word meaning and pronunciation. If a clue is given in a sentence, suggest to the child that he read on to the end of the sentence—or the end of the paragraph—to get a clue to the meaning.

**Exercise 2** Prepare several sentences including unknown words in which the remainder of the sentence gives a clue for unlocking the unknown word. Make certain that other words in the sentences are known. Examples are these.

a. You can't teach old dogs new _____. (tricks)
b. I cannot stop because I am in a _____. (hurry)
c. The little _____ followed the mother dog. (puppy)
d. We went riding in my father's _____. (car)
e. Joe _____ the ball up and down. (bounced)

Such an exercise offers an excellent opportunity to teach that context clues merely limit the possibilities. For instance, in *d, automobile* would fit just as well as *car.* At this point the teacher may wish to insert the first letter (or letters in cases of consonant digraphs and blends) in each blank. This should be followed by another set of sentences.

a. The dog b _____ at the cat. (barked)
b. They sang "Happy B_____" to Mary. (Birthday)
c. He drove the car into the g_____. (garage)
d. He picked up the book and began to r _____. (read)
e. The glass br _____ when it hit the floor. (broke)

**Exercise 3** A new word may be introduced by asking a question that will elicit the new word. "What animal has a very long neck?" (giraffe) When the correct word is given, write it on the chalkboard. Other possible questions are, "What noise does the dog make?" (bark) "What noise does the cat make?" (purr or meow).

**Exercise 4** Prepare short paragraphs in which several words have been left out. Give the first and last letters of the missing words, as in the example below.

Our f_____l team won the g_____e. The boys pl_____d well. The sc_____e was 23 to 14. The st_____m was filled to c_____y.

## ENDINGS WITH NO CHANGE IN ROOT WORD

**Exercise 1** (Adding *s* as plural form of noun) Write a sentence using the plural form of some noun the child knows in singular form, as "He had two *cats.*" Ask some child to read the sentence for you. From context (with the *two* immediately preceding *cats*) the child is very likely to say the word correctly. Then say, "This is a word we know with an *s* added to it. See?" (Write the word *cat* on the board. Under it write the word *cats.*) "Sometimes when we want to say that something is more than one, we add an *s* to that word. Now let's read these sentences."

a. Bill has one *dog.*
   John has five *dogs.*
b. He has a *car.*
   See all the *cars* going down the street?
c. A *boy* came into the room.
   Two *boys* came into the room.

**Exercise 2** (Adding *ed* to verbs) Write a sentence using a known verb (as *jump)* with an *ed* to show past tense. "I jumped over the fence." Ask some child to read the sentence to you. If he stumbles over *jumped*, use a card to cover the *ed*, and ask him what the word is now. Ask him what he says when he jumped yesterday. Remind him if he does it now, he would say, "I jump." Lead him into seeing that he would say *jumped* if it happened in the past. Then write other sentences in which *ed* is added to other known verbs without a change in the root word. Have the children read them.

a. We can *play* ball.
   We *played* ball yesterday.
b. Will you *look* at me?
   She *looked* at me.
c. Mary, *call* your sister.
   Mary *called* to her sister.

**Exercise 3** (Adding *'s* to show possession) Write a phrase in which all words are familiar to the children except one word to which *'s* has been added, as "father's pretty car." Ask a child to read the phrase for you. If he has difficulty with the word *father's* cover the *'s* and ask what the word is. Then, as a clue if the child still cannot get the word, ask how you would say this word if you wanted to say the pretty car belonged to father. Lead him into saying *father's*. (Tell him, of course, if necessary). Then say that whenever we want to say something belongs to someone else, we add this mark (place the apostrophe on the board) and *s*. Write several other phrases on the board, as *"sister's yellow dress," "Marcy's house," "Bill's boat,"* and *"the cat's food."*

Next write sentences using the possessive form of known words.

a. This is *Bill's* cap.
b. *Mother's* dress is blue.
c. The *dog's* food is hot.

Ask children to tell you which word in each sentence shows that something belongs to someone else. You may suggest that some child underline the word in each sentence which shows that something belongs to someone else.

**Exercise 4** (Adding *es* to verbs and nouns) Write the following sentences on the board.

a. I *wish* I could go. She *wishes* she could go.
b. I will *wash* my ears. He *washes* his ears.
c. Put it in a *box*. We filled two *boxes*.
d. I broke one *dish*. John broke two *dishes*.
e. Let me *toss* the ball. Watch as she *tosses* the ball.

Call attention to the *es* ending and explain that sometimes we add *es* rather than *s* to a word. Sentences may be made with other words.

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| watch | watches | fix | fixes | brush | brushes |
| go | goes | potato | potatoes | bench | benches |
| fox | foxes | tomato | tomatoes | dash | dashes |
| flash | flashes | church | churches | reflex | reflexes |
| ash | ashes | latch | latches | toss | tosses |
| pinch | pinches | miss | misses | birch | birches |

(After the children understand that *es* may be used instead of *s* as an ending, and after syllabication has been taught, it may be pointed out that after *ch*, *sh*, and *x* endings—all except *o* endings of words above—the addition of *es* usually adds a syllable to the word.)

**Exercise 5** (Adding *er* or *est* to words to show comparative or superlative degree) Write on the board several sentences similar to these.

a. It is a *high* hill. This hill is *higher*. That is the *highest* hill.
b. He is a *great* man. His grandfather was a *greater* man than he is. His uncle was the *greatest* of them all.
c. I am a *large* boy. He is *larger* than I am. Joe is the *largest* boy in school.

Discuss what is meant by adding *er* to a word to show comparison.

Explain that *er* is added to show that one thing is higher than another, that one thing is greater than another, that one things is larger than another. Two things are being compared. Call attention to the root word in each *er* word to show that each root word *(high, great, large)* is a known word.

Explain that adding *est* shows that one of a group of things is superior—better than all others, the best of a group. The *est* means that one hill is *highest* of all hills being compared, one man is *greatest* of all men being compared, and one boy is the *largest* of all boys being compared. Again, call attention to the root word in each case to show that it is a known word to which *est* has been added.

Other words which may be used follow.

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| fast | faster | fastest | light | lighter | lightest |
| slow | slower | slowest | warm | warmer | warmest |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| quick | quicker | quickest | cold | colder | coldest |
| dark | darker | darkest | low | lower | lowest |

**Exercise 6** (Adding *ing* to root) Put sentences similar to these on board.

a. Do not *jump* in the house. Stop *jumping* in the house.
b. *Watch* the ball. She was *watching* the ball.
c. Sam, *go* home! Sam is *going* home.

Have one child read the first pair of sentences. Give help on *jumping* if the child cannot get the word for himself. Cover the *ing* and ask what the word is. If necessary, write *jump*, have the child pronounce it, then add *ing*, and tell the child it is *jumping*. Follow the same procedure for the other words.

Other words which may be used are these.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| show | showing | fall | falling |
| see | seeing | pitch | pitching |
| throw | throwing | play | playing |
| fill | filling | lock | locking |
| climb | climbing | read | reading |

**Exercise 7** (Locating root) Use exercise similar to this one. Draw a line around the root word in each of the following.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| flying | seeing | called | unhappy |
| jumps | helped | lovely | return |
| landed | cars | jumpy | disable |
| windy | watches | wishing | rerun |

## ENDINGS WITH CHANGES IN ROOT WORD

**Exercise 1** Double consonant before *ed* or *ing* ending. Write the following sentences on the chalkboard.

a. See the rabbit *hop*. The rabbit *hopped* down the road. It is *hopping* down the road.
b. Do not *stop* until you get there. She *stopped* at the store. We are *stopping* at Grandmother's house.
c. Don't *cut* your hand. He is *cutting* the grass.

Ask some child to read the first pair of sentences. Call attention to the doubling of the consonant before the *ed* or *ing* endings. Emphasize that it happens sometimes. Have the children read the other sentences.

After the understanding of the doubled consonant is developed, the teacher may lead the children into seeing that the doubled consonant is a clue to the sound of the preceding vowel. It may be taught as follows.

Place the following words on the board—*hopped, hopping, stopped, cutting, spotted, spotting.* Call attention to the doubled consonant before the ending. Ask if the first vowel is long or short. Then lead the children into stating that when the consonant is doubled before the ending, the vowel sound probably is short.

**Exercise 2** (Dropping *e* before an *ing* ending) Write sentences similar to the following on the board.

a. I *hope* that you are going with me. He is *hoping* to come to my party.
b. I have a *surprise* for you. We had a *surprising* thing to happen.
c. She will *drive* the car. John is *driving* a red car.

Ask someone to read the first sentence, then the second sentence, and so on. Then write the words *hope* and *hoping* in a column. As the children watch, erase the *e* in *hope* and write *ing* in its place. Go through the same procedure with the remaining sentences. The lead the children into saying for themselves that sometimes final *e* is dropped before an ending is added.

Later, the use of the single consonant before the ending may be taught as a clue to the sound of the first vowel letter. The child is shown that the single consonant letter usually indicates that the vowel sound is long.

Other words which may be used are as follows.

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| slide | sliding | name | naming | blaze | blazing |
| ride | riding | change | changing | grade | grading |
| hike | hiking | use | using | save | saving |
| fade | fading | place | placing | raise | raising |
| file | filing | hide | hiding | rise | rising |
| explode | exploding | smile | smiling | trace | tracing |

**Exercise 3** (Changing *y* to *i* before an ending) Write the following sentences on the board.

a. The *party* is fun. She had two birthday *parties.*
b. Look at the *baby*. She has two *babies* in her arms.
c. Georgia has one large *city*. The United States has many large *cities.*

Have the children read the sentences. Write *party* on the board, and directly below it, write *parties.* Ask a child to tell what is meant when we way *party*. Ask another child to tell what is meant when we say *parties.* Point to each word as

you say it. The understanding being sought is that *party* means one and *parties* means more than one. Do the same for the other words.

Other words that may be used are as follows.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| lady | ladies | treaty | treaties |
| fly | flies | body | bodies |
| spy | spies | story | stories |
| ferry | ferries | berry | berries |

Call attention to the difference in the plural form of *party, baby* and *city* and those you have studied previously in which as *s* is added without any other change in the word (as in *car*). Conclude with the statement that sometimes we change a *y* at the end of a word to *i* and add *es* to make that word plural.

Next, the same principle may be shown to apply to the adding of *ed* to verbs ending in *y* as in *hurry—hurried, carry—carried,* and *dry—dried.*

**Exercise 4** (Changing *f* to *v* before an ending) Place sentences similar to the following on the board.

a. Give me a *loaf* of bread. How many *loaves* do you want?
b. He gave me *half* of his apple. I have both *halves* now.
c. He gave me an oak *leaf.* The tree has many *leaves.*

After each pair of sentences is read, write the underscored words on the board in columnar form, calling attention to the change from *f* to *v* before *es* is added to show the plural. Use the same procedure with the other two pairs of sentences. Other words which may be used are *elf, calf, shelf, calf, wolf, sheaf, hoof, beef* and *thief.*

Later the same procedure may be used with *knife, wife, life* and other words ending in *fe.* The teacher this time leads the children into seeing that the same principle applies to some words ending in *fe.*

**Exercise 5** (Identifying root words) Use an exercise in which the children are asked to write the word from which the derived or inflected form was made. Do not use the terms "derived" and "inflected" unless these terms have previously been taught to the children. Instead, ask the children to tell the word from which the presented word was made. Explain that this is the root word. Possible words are these.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| jumps | dries | hoping | rerun |
| climbed | happiness | potatoes | unhook |
| reaching | knives | freezing | farmer |
| looking | surprising | sliding | disable |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| running | fried | hurried | lonely |
| goes | selves | smiling | unfeeling |

## COMPOUND WORDS

**Exercise 1** When the child does not know a compound word made of two known words (as *milkman*), the teacher may quickly cover with a card the second word *(man)* and ask the child what the word now is *(milk)*. The first part of the word is next covered, and the child is then asked to pronounce the word he sees. "Let's put them together now," the teacher says. "Now we have *milkman*."

**Exercise 2** Place this exercise on the chalkboard or mimeograph it to be distributed to the children.

Build new words by putting a word from column A with a word from column B. Write the new words on the line to the right.

| A | B |
|---|---|
| grand | road |
| air | ball |
| straw | father |
| school | berry |
| rail | house |
| base | plane |

(The directions may ask that the lines be drawn to connect the words that go together to make the new words.)

**Exercise 3** Use in mimeographed form or place on the chalkboard exercises similar to the following.

Write in the blank the remainder of the word needed in each sentence. Select from among the possibilities given.

a. We went to visit my grand _____.
   father house cousin
b. Let's play base _____.
   fall tall ball
c. I want some strawberry short _____.
   rake cake lake

**Exercise 4** Make as many compound words as you can from the following words.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| grand | mother | shop | keeper |
| store | father | baby | house |

**Exercise 5** Write the two words from which the large one is made.

a. Let's play *baseball.* _____ _____
b. Jack climed the *beanstalk.* _____ _____
c. Did you see the *starfish?* _____ _____
d. I've never seen a *snowplow.* _____ _____
e. His father is a *shoemaker.* _____ _____
f. The *postman* brought our mail. _____ _____
g. The *goldfish* swims in the bowl. _____ _____
h. The *cowboy* rode his horse. _____ _____
i. We sat in the *grandstand.* _____ _____
j. Father read the *newspaper.* _____ _____
k. The *birdcage* is pretty. _____ _____
l. Don't shoot *firecrackers.* _____ _____

## CONTRACTIONS

**Exercise 1** Write the following pairs of sentences on the board.

a. *Do not* open the door. *Don't* open the door.
b. He *can not* visit us. He *can't* visit us.
c. *They are* here now. *They're* here now.

Ask some child to read the first pair of sentences. Help the child with *don't* if he does not recognize it. You may ask him what he usually says instead of *do not* which means the same. Tell him if he does not respond quickly. Do the same with the other pairs of sentences. Tell the children that sometimes "a mark like this" (make an apostrophe on the chalkboard) is used in place of one or more letters when two words are put together to make one.

At a later time, the more complex contractions, those in which two or more letters have been replaced with an apostrophe, may be taught. These include *won't, we'll, you'd, we'd* and *we've.*

**Exercise 2** Prepare an exercise similar to the following. Write in the blank the contracted word which may be used instead of the words underlined.

a. He *will not* come to the picnic with us.
b. *We will* be happy to see you.
c. We *do not* like the color.
d. *You would* enjoy a trip to New York.
e. *We would* want you to come to see us.

**Exercise 3** Write the two words from which the contracted word was made.

a. We *don't* want to see you. _____

b. *Let's* be on our way. _____ _____
c. He *didn't* know us. _____ _____
d. We *aren't* near the end. _____ _____
e. He *wouldn't* do it alone. _____ _____
f. *Can't* you come? _____ _____
g. *Shouldn't* you be there? _____ _____
h. *Mary's* in the house. _____ _____
i. We *won't* come. _____ _____
j. *I'll* be ready in a minute. _____ _____

**Exercise 4** Write the letters that are omitted.

a. I *can't* come. _____
b. *Aren't* you going? _____
c. We *won't* be there. _____
d. *I'll* tell you later. _____
e. *Let's* be ready. _____
f. *You'll* regret not being there. _____
g. *He'd* make a good player. _____
h. *We've* seen all we need to see. _____
i. *I'd* like to go. _____
j. *What's* his name? _____

## PREFIXES

**Exercise 1** Place on the board four or five words known to the children in which the same prefix is used. Select at least one or two of them from something the children have just read. Words like *unhappy, unpleasant, untied, unopened* and *uncut* may be used. Have the words read, and ask what each means. Lead children toward seeing that in each case *un* means *not*, as *unhappy—not happy, unpleasant—not pleasant*, etc.

The same procedure may be used for teaching other prefixes, as *re* (meaning *again*) and *dis* (meaning *not*).

**Exercise 2** Put a group of words with the same prefix on the board. These words should be in the children's reading vocabulary. Make a sentence with each, and ask the children to tell what each word means. Then ask what the prefix means. Possible words are these.

| *re* | *dis* | *un* | *dis* |
|---|---|---|---|
| recall | disable | unfit | disarm |
| rebuild | disbelieve | unheard | disarrange |
| rediscover | discontented | unlike | disconnect |
| reforest | dishonorable | unequal | discharge |
| regain | disloyal | unlimited | disappear |

| repay | dislike | unkind | disband |
|---|---|---|---|
| replace | disobey | unfair | disjoin |
| (again) | (not) | (not) | (apart or *un*) |

**Exercise 3** Write the meaning of the prefix on the line beneath the list of words in which the prefix is used.

| unable | remake | premature | impossible |
|---|---|---|---|
| unarmed | renew | preschool | imperfect |
| unaided | recall | preview | impatient |
| unaware | reread | prehistoric | impolite |
| unattended | rewrite | prejudge | immodest |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| indifferent | antifreeze | telephone | foresee |
| incomplete | antinoise | telescope | foretell |
| inexact | antiaircraft | telegraph | foreground |
| inactive | antitoxin | telephoto | forenoon |
| inhuman | anticyclone | television | forewarn |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| counterattack | international | misconduct | deice |
| countercharm | interstate | misadventure | dehumidify |
| counterbalance | intercity | misrepresent | deactivate |
| counterclaim | interact | misunderstand | debrief |
| countermarch | intertropical | mislay | decontaminate |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |

**Exercise 4** Rewrite the sentences below to show that you know the meaning of the italicized word. Write the meaning of the prefix.

a. The guard left the storehouse *unattended.*

_____

b. He poured the *antifreeze* solution into his radiator.

_____

c. Why do you pretend to be *indifferent* to the entire matter ?

_____

d. You have been *forewarned.*

_____

e. The sergeant *deactivated* the bomb.

_____

**Exercise 5** Answer YES or NO to the questions.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| a. Does *intercity* mean within the city? | YES | NO |
| b. Does *counteract* mean to act in an opposite manner? | YES | NO |
| c. Does one who *retrogresses* move forward? | YES | NO |
| d. Does one who *foresees* know in advance? | YES | NO |
| e. Does *inexact* mean rigorous? | YES | NO |

**Exercise 6** Write *in, il, im,* or *ir* to complete each of the words below. Check with your dictionary where necessary.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| _____exact | _____animate | _____legal |
| _____patience | _____attentive | _____regular |
| _____balance | _____rational | _____perfect |
| _____legible | _____polite | _____decent |
| _____possible | _____excusable | _____redeemable |
| _____moral | _____religious | _____congruous |
| _____probable | _____liberal | _____movable |
| _____refutable | _____mature | _____cautious |
| _____relevant | _____recoverable | _____audible |
| _____logical | _____combustible | _____modest |
| _____mobile | _____reversible | _____mortal |

After you have completed this exercise and have checked the dictionary where you were in doubt, the write in *in-* words in one column, the *il-* words in another, and so on. Study the words. Do you see any patterns?

Go back over the words and define each. Do not write down your definitions; think through each one. Refer to your dictionary when in doubt.

## SUFFIXES

**Exercise 1** Write on the board several words with the same suffix. These should be taken from the children's recent reading. Ask the children to tell what each means, and then have the children tell what the suffix means. Words similar to those below may be used.

| *-y* | *-er* | *-ness* |
|---|---|---|
| rainy | farmer | happiness |
| snowy | baker | softness |
| sleepy | driver | illness |
| frosty | rider | bitterness |
| mighty | owner | darkness |
| (Inclined to or like) | (One who) | (Quality of being) |

**Exercise 2** Write the meaning of the suffix used on the line beneath the list of words in each column.

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| traveler | friendly | useful | wooden | American |
| keeper | brightly | careful | oaken | Indian |
| farmer | loudly | helpful | flaxen | Russian |
| driver | gladly | playful | earthen | Georgian |
| baker | bravely | wonderful | woolen | Mexican |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| western | foolish | fearless | settlement | upward |
| eastern | bookish | hopeless | management | backward |
| northern | fortyish | helpless | excitement | homeward |
| southern | mulish | harmless | judgment | inward |
| northeastern | girlish | selfless | movement | outward |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| childhood | action | heroic | friendship | excitable |
| manhood | election | volcanic | companionship | movable |
| knighthood | invention | dramatic | workmanship | adaptable |
| girlhood | celebration | electronic | horsemanship | usable |
| boyhood | intention | historic | courtship | likable |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |

**Exercise 3** Rewrite the sentences below to show that you know the meaning of the italicized word. Write the meaning of the suffix.

a. The *farmer* came to town.

_____

b. The *southeastern* section of the U.S. is beautiful

_____

c. His *mulish* actions irritate me.

_____

d. This is a *dramatic* occasion.

_____

e. The *woolen* shirt is too hot.

_____

**Exercise 4** Answer YES or NO to these questions.

a. Is a *wooden* bowl made of wood? YES NO

b. Is *knighthood* the covering worn on his head? YES NO

c. Is *courtship* the name of a boat used for courting? YES NO

d. Is a *baker* one who bakes? YES NO

e. Is a *selfless* person who is always concerned with himself? YES NO

## DICTIONARY USE

**Exercise 1** (Alphabetizing) Place exercise on board or mimeograph. Ask the children to arrange in alphabetical order the words in each column.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| doll | just | quick | wrong | bottle | man |
| glass | it | only | young | band | minute |
| apple | lost | rat | very | boat | muscle |
| every | not | since | xray | battle | must |
| candy | him | pot | zebra | bonded | mix |
| boy | mine | uncle | | breach | maximum |
| fan | king | toy | | bread | minor |

**Exercise 2** (Opening the dictionary) Ask the children to open the dictionary to words beginning with certain letters. Have them divide the dictionary in half to see where it falls open. Next have them divide the dictionary in fourths.

**Exercise 3** (Using guide words) Explain that the two words in boldface type at the top of each page are known as guidewords. Ask the children to look at the first and last words defined on a page. Then ask them to look at the guidewords on that page. Explain that the words help them save time because they can tell at a glance if the word is on that page. Give practice in using the guidewords in locating underscored words in sentences placed on the chalkboard.

**Exercise 4** (Using guidewords) Below are listed groups of guidewords and entries. For each group, put a check by each word that will be found on the page. Write "Before" if the entry word comes before that page. Write "After" if the entry word comes after that page.

| mistletoe-mock | fallen-fanciful | plunder-poetical |
|---|---|---|
| _____ mistrust | _____ family | _____ pocket |
| _____ mistaken | _____ false | _____ plump |
| _____ mockery | _____ falcon | _____ poetry |
| _____ mite | _____ famish | _____ plural |
| _____ moan | _____ fancy | _____ poach |
| _____ misspell | _____ familiar | _____ plume |

**Exercise 5** (Finding words) Some words are entered separately in the dictionary. They are called entry words. Many words, having no separate entries, are listed under other words. They are called runon entries. Put an *E* by those words that are entry words. Put an *R* by those that are runon entries.

| | |
|---|---|
| _____ happy | _____ machinery |
| _____ unhappy | _____ inept |
| _____ happiness | _____ ran |
| _____ happily | _____ vaulting |
| _____ puppies | _____ looked |
| _____ lovely | _____ foxes |

**Exercise 6** (Selecting correct meaning) Write sentences similar to the following on the board.

a. The old gentleman means *well.*
b. He *bridged* the gap in the conversation.
c. We put very little *stock* in his story.

Ask the children to read the sentences, look up the meanings of the underscored words and then decide which meaning fits each sentence.

Each time the child looks up a word he should be encouraged to put the selected meaning back into the context to see if it fits. If it does not make sense, he tries another meaning.

**Exercise 7** (Selecting correct meaning) Find the definitions of *set* in your dictionary. Then, in the space given, write the number of the definition of *set* that fits its use in the sentence.

_____ a. Mary will *set* the table.
_____ b. She sure is *set* in her ways.
_____ c. She wanted a *set* of dishes.
_____ d. The concrete has *set.*
_____ e. You can *set* it on the desk.
_____ f. She had her hair *set.*
_____ g. His action *set* the direction of the meeting.
_____ h. He *set* sail at dawn.
_____ i. Let's watch the sun *set* in the west.
_____ j. They ran around with the right *set.*
_____ k. He *set* it to music.
_____ l. She *set* the time for the party.
_____ m. This sound *set* your mind at east.
_____ n. My television *set* is not working.
_____ o. With a *set* jaw, he showed his displeasure.
_____ p. He *set* the pace.

**Exercise 8** (Using the pronunciation key) A simple discussion of the pronunciation key (or keys) is very helpful. Call attention to the location of the main pronunciation key (usually on inside of front cover) and discuss what it tells. Show the abbreviated pronunciation key carried at the bottom of the page (in many dictionaries). Discuss its use.

**Exercise 9** (Using the pronunciation key) Pronounce each word. Look up the pronunciation in the dicationary to check on your pronunciation if you are in doubt. Make a sentence using each word.

a. solemn
b. calm
c. climb
d. silent
e. schism
f. literature
g. dictionary
h. err
i. honor
j. humor
k. salmon
l. hymn
m. garage
n. alone
o. height
p. women
q. schwa
r. doubt
s. bleat
t. government

**Exercise 10** (Diacritical markings) Explain that the long vowel sound is indicated in the dictionary by a straight mark above the vowel letter. Illustrate on the board. (At this stage, the children would know long and short sounds.) Review the long vowel sounds. Then ask the children to look up several words with long vowel sounds that you have placed on the board, as *bake, cute, shine* and *bite.*

The same procedure may be used for other diacritical markings. However, the teacher should be thoroughly familiar with the diacritical markings in the dictionary used in her classroom. Dictionaries often vary in their markings. For instance, the vowel letters representing the short vowel sounds in some dictionaries have no markings whereas in others a breve is used.

Another helpful plan is to prepare a chart of the long and short sound of the vowels, using a key word—with appropriate diacritical marks—for each vowel sound, as *ā—cake, ē—feet, ī—like* or *by, ō—gold,* and *ū—cute.*

**Exercise 11** (Diacritical markings) Pronounce each phonetically spelled word given below.

a. hungk
b. kun′trē
c. kə rā′jəs
d. kām
e. his tir ē ə
f. nelt
g. ri düs′
h. ri zult′
i. skôrn
j. tôk

k. sėr′kəs
l. sit′rəs
m. puls
n. sēt
o. sē′šid′
p. si kyůr′
q. trub′l
r. vizh′ən
s. dāz
t. fůt

**Exercise 12** (Diactricial markings) Write the correct spelling of the word in each sentence that is spelled phonetically. Be ready to discuss its meaning.

a. The woodman's *(närld)* hands held the axe with a strong grip.
b. The man worked the *(nü mat′ik)* drill.
c. The *(kə mē lē ən)* changed its color.
d. The light flowed from the *(shan′də lir ).*
e. The *(sə kā′də)* buzzed by me.
f. The *(də brē̃)* fell all about us.
g. She played the *(zī′lə fon).*
h. It will *(pēk)* his curiosity.
i. He landed at the *(kē).*
j. He is a noted *(fə lan′thrə pist).*

**Exercise 13** (Accent marks) Explain that in words of two or three syllables one of the syllables is usually accented, that is, it is stressed—as in *UP′ward, re-TURN′,* or *CLAR′i-ty.* Pronounce some two-syllable words, and have the children tell which syllable is stressed in each. (Additional suggestions for teaching accent are included in the chapter on phonics and related skills.)

(Dictionaries prepared for use in the schools usually suggest excellent exercises for teaching all of the dictionary skills.)

CHAPTER 4

# THE PLACE OF PHONICS AND RELATED SKILLS IN WORD RECOGNITION

This chapter presents an overall view of the place of phonics in the reading program, many of the facts the teacher needs to know about the relationships of sounds to words and a discussion of phonics to be taught. The chapter is not limited solely to phonics, however. Since syllabication and accent are essential for phonic attacks upon words of more than one syllable, they are also included. The next chapter is devoted to suggestions for teaching each of the skills.

Phonics is that part of word recognition that deals with the relationship of sounds to printed symbols. Phonetics, on the other hand, deals only with sounds. Linguistic scientists use the term "phonemics" rather than "phonetics" and refer to "phoneme-grapheme correspondences" instead of "sound-symbol relationship" or "phonics." These terms are defined in the glossary.

## THE PLACE OF PHONICS IN THE READING PROGRAM

Phonics is one group of skills that assists in unlocking unknown words, and phonics instruction certainly is an important part of the primary grade reading program. Such instruction should also be a part of reading programs at higher grade levels when pupils show weaknesses in phonics. Phonics takes its place along with context clues, structural analysis and dictionary use as means of attacking unknown words.

Phonics alone will not give the meaning of the word. The use of phonics, however, may trigger meaning that the reader already has. Children often use phonics elements to pronounce the new word and then discover that they know the meaning of the word. Sometimes, though, they use phonics to unlock the pronunciation of the word and then have little or no idea of what it means. For example, the child may encounter this sentence, "He rowed the boat around the bight." By using initial consonant substitution (sound for letter *b* substituted for initial consonant sound in the word *light* or *fight*), he pronounces the word *bight*. Does he know the meaning? The context merely tells him that a boat can be rowed around it. The exact meaning in this case depends upon the child's past learning—whether he already knows the meaning of *bight* as it is used in this sentence.

When the reader pronounces the word and still does not know the meaning, the meaning them must come from the context, someone telling him, or from the dictionary or glossary. Despite this limitation, these principles and sound-symbol associations should be taught because they offer one set of techniques for recognition of unknown words.

## PHONICS AND THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

The English language contains more than forty elementary sounds. The exact number of sounds listed varies slightly from one dictionary to another. Regardless of the exact number of elementary sounds, there are far more sounds than there are letters in the alphabet. The alphabet consists of only twenty-six letters, three of which represent no sounds that can be considered their own. The consonant letters in about half the cases ordinarily represent only one sound, and those that are associated with more than one sound are usually limited to two. The vowel letters, then, must represent the many sounds that remain.

Letters obviously have no sounds; they represent or stand for sounds. It is acceptable practice in teaching, however, to refer to the "*f* sound," the "*l* sound," and so on. The intent here is to refer to the sound that ordinarily is represented by a given letter—as *f* or *l*.

All written words contain at least one vowel letter, and if a person searches long enough he will find several substitutes—letter for letter or letter for combination of letters—for almost any sound represented by a vowel letter. For example, the long *a* sound may be represented by *a* (as in *ate*), *ay* (as in *day*), *ai* (as in *nail*), *ey* (as in *grey*), and *ei (gh)* (as in *sleigh*). One may conclude erroneously that the sound-symbol relationships in English are highly irregular. However, enough of the sound-symbol associations in the language are regular and predictable to make it well worthwhile for children to learn to use phonics in attacking unknown words.

## VARIOUS PHONICS APPROACHES

Few people today debate whether or not to include phonics as a part of reading instruction. Arguments do persist, however, over how much phonics instruction should be given, the sequence to be followed, whether it should be intensive or gradual, whether it should be synthetic or analytic, whether inductive or deductive approaches should be used and whether, in the beginning, the code should be taught before giving concern to meaning. Commercial materials available for use in reading programs consciously or unconsciously reflect viewpoints on these issues.

Though some research evidence is available to help in making decisions about some of the points of argument, decisions are usually made on the basis of logic, teacher preference and teacher observation. It will be obvious to the reader that this bulletin suggests a gradual program of phonics interwoven as a part of regular reading instruction, an analytical pattern of word attack, more dependence upon an inductive approach to teaching generalizations and an emphasis upon meaning from the beginning. Some of the preferences on sequence are given elsewhere in this bulletin. Whatever the approach, the teacher

competence will largely determine how effective if will be.

## THE SKILLS OF PHONICS

The phonics skills needed for attacking unknown words fall into two broad groups; association of sound with individual letters or groups of letters and the phonics principles. The skills of syllabication and accent are also needed in attacking longer words.

## THE PHONICS AND RELATED SKILLS

**Consonants** A consonant sound is sometimes defined as one in which the tongue, lips or teeth, or a combination of these, obstructs the breath as the sound is made. Twenty-one of the letters of the alphabet, all except the vowels *a, e, i, o* and *u,* are classified as consonant letters. About one half of the consonant letters ordinarily represent only one sound each, and as stated earlier, three of the consonant letters have no sounds of their own, that is, associated with them. The letter *c* represents either the *k* sound (hard *c*) or the *s* sound (soft *c*); the letter *q* always is found in English words in combination with *u* and has the sound of *kw;* and the letter *x* represents either *eks* (as in *xray*), *ks* (as in *box*), *gz* (as in *exit*) or *z* (as in *xylophone*).

Because of the stability of consonant letters in that they frequently represent the same sound each time, they are among the earliest phonic elements taught. Hearing initial consonant sounds is often taught at the pre-reading readiness stage and instruction in association of initial consonant letters and sounds in words begins at pre-primer or primer level.

Hearing and seeing initial consonants in words is begun first. Then hearing and seeing final consonants is taught. Older children who are having difficulty with phonics may need more work on auditory and visual discrimination.

**Consonant digraphs** A consonant digraph consists of two consonant letters representing one speech sound. Some of the commonly taught consonant digraphs are *ch (church, chin), ck (neck), gn (gnat), ph (phone, graph), sh (shore, wish), th (this, smooth), th (thick, worth)* and *wr (wrote).* Another special consonant symbol—*wh* as in *what*—is also listed as a consonant digraph. Dictionaries usually represent the sound with *h* and *w,* the *h* coming first. Phoneticians generally consider *wh* as one sound, thus making it a consonant digraph. In some words in which *wh* is followed by *o,* as in *who,* the *wh* represents the *h* sound. The consonant digraphs are of three types; those in which the two letters in combination represent a sound like neither of the sounds of the two letters standing alone nor of an individual letter (as in *sh, th, ch*), those in which one letter is "silent" (as in *ck, gn, kn, wr*), and those in which the sound is that of some single consonant (*ph*). Most basal reading series

make provisions for beginning the teaching of the consonant digraphs at the pre-primer or primer level.

**Consonant blends** A consonant blend consists of two or three consonant sounds blended together rapidly. The sounds of both (or all three) consonants may be heard when the blend is pronounced. Consonant blends include *bl, br, cl, cr, dr, dw, fl, fr, gl, gr, pl, pr, qu, sc, sk, sl, sm, sn, sp, st, sw, tr, tw, chr, shr, scr, str* and *thr*. Blends most frequently involve *r* and *l* as second letters (or sounds), and the letter *s* frequently is the first letter of consonant blends. Sometimes these are referred to as the *r, l* and *s* blends. The teaching of consonant blends begins at primer or first grade difficulty level and continues into the third grade difficulty level for the more difficult and frequently used blends

## INITIAL AND FINAL CONSONANT SUBSTITUTIONS

A useful technique often introduced at primer or first reader difficulty level is that in which a known word aids the child in recognizing an unknown word. When the child meets the word *tan* for the first time, he recognizes that with the exception of the first letter, it is like *can*, a word he has in his sight vocabulary. He substitutes in his thinking the sound represented by the letter *t* for the sound represented by the letter *c* (hard *c*) and blends mentally the *t* and *an*, thus coming out with the correct word *tan*. After the initial substitution is learned, the child is taught to make final substitutions, such as recognizing the word *flag* by final substitution of the sound of *g* for the sound of *t* in the known word *flat*.

This consonant substitution process involves the following skills: seeing in the new word a part which is similar to a known word and then making a mental substitution of the initial sound of the new word for the initial sound of the known word with or without oral expression. Though only initial and final consonant substitutions are discussed here, initial and final omissions and additions may also be taught. Examples of these are initial omissions—recognizing *an* because of similarity to *band*; initial addition—recognizing *rant* because of similarity to *ran*. These latter clues, though useful, are not of as much value as initial and final consonant substitutions.

**Vowels** A vowel sound is an open, or unobstructed sound, and each syllable has at least one vowel. Five letters of the alphabet are vowel letters, and two of the consonants under certain circumstances may be used as vowels. The five vowel letters are *a, e, i, o* and *u*. When *y* is used to represent the *i* or *e* sound, as in *by, cylinder* or *happy*, it is a vowel letter. In combination with *o* as in *cow, w* is used as a vowel letter. In one other *w* combination (*ew* as in *new*) *w* is sometimes listed as a vowel letter.

The burden of representing many of the elementary sounds in the English language falls on the vowel letters, thus making each stand for more than one sound. The majority of the vowel sounds are "short." Other frequently heard

vowel sounds are the "long" sounds, the indeterminate vowel (as in *u* in *circus* represented by a schwa in some dictionaries), the vowel controlled by *r* and *a* followed by *l*, *u* or *w*.

The long and short vowel sounds are taught at the first or second grade difficulty level, and the short sound of each vowel is usually taught before the long sound. The child meets the short sound much more frequently than the long, and this frequency of need often dictates the instructional sequence.

A key to the short and long vowel sounds follows.

| | |
|---|---|
| Short a - apple | Long a - ape |
| Short e - elephant | Long e - eagle |
| Short i - ill | Long i - ice |
| Short o - otter | Long o - oak |
| Short u - up | Long u - use |

The long vowel sounds, since they "say themselves," are not difficult to remember. A key word should be learned for the short sound of each vowel letter. If no clue is apparent (such as "silent" e at the end of the word), the child should try the short sound first. If the short sound does not work, the long sound should be tried, and so on.

"Long" and "short" refer to quality rather than duration of sound. In some words a short vowel sound may last longer (be of longer duration) than a long vowel sound.

Several vowel principles are taught at the first or second grade difficulty level. These help the children tell whether to try a long, short, or some other vowel sound in an unknown word. These principles are discussed later.

**Vowel digraphs** A vowel digraph is a combination of two vowel letters representing one sound. Among the vowel digraphs are *ai (nail, ay (pay), ea (eat) ee (sweep), ie (yield), oa (goat), oe (hoe), ue (true), oo (look or loose), ou (cough), au (haul)* and *ew (drew)*. The skills involved in recognizing vowel digraphs are usually considered as first or second grade difficulty level skills. One of the phonics principles to be discussed later is concerned with recognition of sounds of some vowel digraphs.

The vowel digraphs are of several types. The type most frequently encountered is that in which the sound represented by the two vowel letters is the long sound of the first, as *ai (rain), ay (day), ea (each) (floats)*, and *oe (toe)*.

**Diphthongs** A diphthong is a combination of two vowel sounds blended together so that traces of both sounds are retained. Most diphthongs are represented by two vowel letters, but in the case of the letters *i*, *u*, and *y*, a single

letter may represent a diphthong. However, pronunciation of long *i* and *u* in the Southeastern United States frequently deviates from exact reproduction of the intended sounds. For that reason, it may be advisable to avoid teaching these letters as diphthongs unless the children raise questions about them. Just as two consonant sounds are blended in most consonant blends, the dipthong may be considered as a blending of two vowel sounds. Diphthongs include *i (ice), oi (oil), ou (out), ow (how), oy (boy)* and *y (by)*. The teaching of diphthongs is usually started at first or second grade difficulty level.

One possibility for confusion lies in the various sounds that the same letter may represent. For example, the sound associated with *ou* in *stout* is a diphthong, whereas *ou* in *cough* stands for a vowel digraph and *ow* in *plow* for a diphthong, whereas *ow* in *bow tie* represented a vowel digraph.

**Phonics principles** A small number of generalizations about the relationship of sounds to letter combinations should be taught to children. These are the generalizations that do not have an excessive number of exceptions. They offer best first guesses at word pronunciation. Sometimes when using these guides on unknown words, children or adults will be correct, but still this approach offers an avenue for intelligent guessing at pronunciation.

For the disabled reader or the child in the regular developmental reading program, these skills should not be taught until the child has learned consonant sounds. Certain of the generalizations also depend upon previous knowledge of long and short vowel sounds; these sounds must be taught before attempting to teach such principles.

Eight principles recommended for teaching are the following.

1. In short words or accented syllables containing two vowel letters, one of which is final *e*, and in which the two vowel letters are separated by a single consonant letter, the vowel sound, in the word usually is the long sound generally associated with the first vowel letter. (*gate, shine, cute*)

2. In short words or accented syllables containing two vowel letters in sequence, the vowel sound usually is the long sound commonly associated with the first vowel letter. (*boat, nail, say*)

3. The sound represented by a single vowel letter is a word or accented syllable ending in a consonant is usually short. (*cat, in, not*)

4. The sound represented by a single vowel letter in a word or an accented syllable, if it comes at the end of the word or syllable, usually is long, (*he, go be*)

5. When a single vowel letter in a word or accented syllable is followed by the letter *r*, the sound of the vowel usually is neither long nor short. *(fir, or, car)*

6. When *a* is followed by *l*, *w* or *u* the sound of the vowel usually is neither long nor short and usually has the sound of *au* in haul. (*also, awful, Paul*)

7. When *c* precedes *e*, *i* or *y*, the sound represented by *c* is usually soft (as *s*); in other cases, it is usually hard (as *k*). *(celery, city, cymbal)*

8. When *g* precedes *e*, *i* or *y*, the sound represented by *g* is usually soft (as *j*); in other cases, it it usually hard (as *g*). (*gem, gin, gym*)

Basal reading series vary in number of these principles suggested for teaching, and often principles not listed above are suggested. Two additional principles have been discussed in Chapter 2 under "Endings with changes in the root word." These involve clues to the sound of the vowel by the single or double consonant before an added ending. In deciding whether to teach a particular generalization, usefulness to the child in attacking new words should be the deciding factor. If many exceptions occur, then the principle should not be taught because it will confuse as much as or more than it will help.

Several studies (Clymer, 1963; Baily, 1967; and Emans, 1967) have investigated the extent to which phonics generalizations are applicable to written materials that children use. In general, these investigations show that some widely taught generalizations have more exceptions than they do applications. One of the principles cited above—number 2 on "two vowels together"—was found by Clymer to be less than 50 percent applicable. Exceptions come mainly from a few vowel combinations: *ie, ea* and *ui*. The teacher may prefer omitting this generalization and teaching the various vowel digraphs as sound-symbol associations. For example, *ie* usually represents the long *e* sound as in *yield*, and *ea* usually represents the short *e* sound as in *head* though it sometimes represents the long *e* sound as in *each*.

Some linguists have used the term "spelling pattern" to refer to what has been labeled here as "phonics generalization." A spelling pattern is the sequence of letters in the written word that represents the sounds in the spoken word. Fries, for example, has presented **three** major spelling patterns in English. The three correspond to the "closed syllable," "final *e*," and "vowel digraph" generalizations previously cited. However, those who approach these principles from the standpoint of spelling patterns use an approach involving a greater degree of contrast (such as adding *e* to *hat* to get *hate*). Spelling pattern approaches also lean heavily upon "word families" assembled on the basis of pattern of spelling. They also often are more concerned in the beginning with "breaking the code" than with obtaining meaning.

The major concern of linguists is with spoken language, and they view writing as a representation of the spoken word. In reading, the reader encounters the written word and must transpose it into meaning or into spoken words. He must interpret—silently or orally—the written word, and the sequencing of the letters within the word (the spelling pattern) tells him what the word is—if he knows the code.

Differences between the usual phonics teaching in developmental reading and the so-called "linguistic" approach are partly in terminology and partly in real differences in viewpoints. Of course, within either of the two groupings are a wide variety of suggested programs. The teacher of phonics in a reading program, faced with a classroom filled with children, is less precise in his terminology than is the linguistic scientist whose job it is to analyze language. Though the classroom teacher may refer to the "sound of the letter *b*," he knows that letters do not make sounds; they represent sounds. The linguist would never be so imprecise. Yet the same linguist often knows much less about other aspects of the reading process.

**Syllabication** A phonic attack upon words of more than one syllable is dependent in part upon a knowledge of the principles of breaking words into their syllables. Syllabication, because of its importance in phonics, is discussed here.

Much of the instruction of syllabication occurs at second and third grade reading difficulty levels. By these levels, children who have mastered the skills of the lower difficulty levels have been introduced to phonics principles in one-syllable words. They also have a thorough knowledge of sounds of single consonants, selected consonant digraphs, most of the consonant blends and the long and short vowel sounds. By adding the skills of breaking words into syllables, they will be able to make use of the one-syllable attacks they have learned in attacking words of more than one syllable. For instance, at first or second grade difficulty level, the children learn that in short words, containing only one vowel letter, the vowel sound is usually long if the letter representing it comes at the end of the word. This principle may be carried a step further after the principles of syllabication are taught. The teacher points out that this generalization also applies to accented syllables. The principle now becomes, in accented syllables containing only one vowel letter, the sound of the vowel is usually long if the vowel letter comes at the end of the syllable. This sometimes is referred to as the "open syllable" principle.

Syllabication skills involve hearing syllables in spoken words, understanding what a syllable is (the parts seen and heard in words) and knowledge of three (sometimes four) principles of syllabication.

The teacher first helps children to determine how many syllables are contained within a word. Then he teaches them what a syllable is. These steps are readiness

for the three syllabication principles to be taught. These principles are as follows.

a. When two consonants come between two vowels in a word, the syllable division usually comes between the two consonants. *(subject, perhaps, engine)* (Exceptions include consonant blends or consonants digraphs.)

b. When one consonant comes between two vowels in a word, the syllable division usually comes before the consonant. *(lazy, even, vacant)*

c. When the last three letters of a word are a consonant followed by *le*, usually the final syllable consists of the consonant and the *le*. *(circle, uncle, sample)* (An exception to this generalization often is taught, also. The exception states that if the letters coming before the *le* are *ck*, then the *le* forms a separate syllable. Sometimes this is referred to as the "pickle" exception.)

A fourth principle is sometimes suggested. That principle states that when *d* or *t* comes before an *ed* ending, the *ed* usually forms a separate syllable. However, this generalization may cause the child to become confused. In spoken English, the syllabic division differs from that made in accordance with the principle. For instance, in the word *planted*, the division should be *plant/ed;* the way it is said is *plan/ted*. For that reason it is suggested that only the first three principles be taught. The fourth principle does not appear to contribute very much to the reading process.

Two of the syllabiciation principles do not function with any degree of regularity in complex words. The "consonant plus *le*" generalization is quite consistent. The inconsistency of the other two has led some persons to recommend omission of these two principles as goals in reading instruction. By remembering that breaks usually are not made between consonant blend and consonant digraph letters, the child will get greater utility of the syllabacation principles.

**Accent** After syllabication has been introduced and the children have had practice in recognizing the number of syllables in words, instruction is started on hearing accented syllables in words. As soon as skill is developed in this area, some of the principles of accent may be taught. Along with this comes work in applying the phonics principles to accented syllables as well as in words of single syllables. Accent is also taught as a part of dictionary skills.

Principles of accent sometimes taught include the following.

a. The first syllable usually is accented in words of two or three syllables. *(apple, cabinet, effort)*

b. The root or stem is usually stressed in a word. *(stressed, return, lovely)*

c. When a prefix is used in a two- or three-syllable word, the accent usually does not fall on the prefix. *(return, unhappy, immobile)*

d. When the same word is used as a different part of speech, its accent may vary. (MIN'ute—mi-NUTE', PRO'duce—pro-DUCE', PROG'ress—pro-GRESS')

e. When words end in *sion* or *tion*, the accent usually falls on the syllable next to the last one. *(vacation, recognition, invention)*

Some children have difficulty in selecting accented syllables because they use a speech pattern in which syllables are stressed almost equally, as BAS-KET insted of the correct BAS-ket. If so, accent principles will be difficult for them to learn.

CHAPTER 5

# SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING PHONICS AND RELATED SKILLS

This chapter offers selected exercises for teaching phonics and related skills. Exercises for every detail of phonics, syllabication and accent are not included. Additional suggestions are available in professional texts on the teaching of reading and in materials designed for use in developmental and remedial reading programs.

## SINGLE CONSONANT SOUNDS

**Exercise 1** (Hearing initial consonants) "Listen carefully as I say these w. ls— *toy, top, Terry, Tom, tin, tag.* I'll say them again. Listen to the beginning sound in each word." (Repeat the words.) "Do you hear the same sound at the beginning of each word?" (Discuss this with the children, saying the words again if necessary.)

"Now I'm going to say some more words. After each word, tell me whether it begins with the sound of our other words— *tick, tap, ton, Henry, tan.*"

"Can you tell me other words you know that begin with the same sound as our words?" (Be sure to use words whose meaning and pronunciation are known to the children.)

**Exercise 2** (Hearing initial consonants) Use pictures from old magazines and books for practice exercise in hearing initial consonants. Place the pictures in piles of three, in which two of the objects or scenes pictured begin with the same sound (as *barn, church* and *ball).* Have the children name the objects or scenes in each pile. The ask the children to name the two that begin with the same sound. Other examples of pictures for use are *bird, bear, rabbit, rat, rooster, house, horse, fish* and *hand.*

**Exercise 3** (Associating letters with initial consonant sounds) Write the following words the children know at sight on the chalkboard—*he, him, her, here, has, home.* "Let's pronounce these words. As we say them, listen carefully." (Pronounce the words.) "Do they all begin with the same sound? Yes, that's right. They also begin with the same letter. When we hear a sound like the beginning sound in these words, what letter do we expect to see? That's right, the letter *h.* The letter *h* stands for the sound we hear in the beginning of these words. Can you think of other words we know that begin with this sound?" (List these on the board.)

(If needed, or as a variation, the teacher may draw a line under the letter *h* in each word as it is pronounced. She may also write the letter *h* to the left of the

column of words to call attention to the letter representing the sound. This type of exercise may be modified to teach the letters also. The modification under such circumstances consists of telling the children the letter at the beginning of each word is an *h*, rather than asking them what it is.)

**Exercise 4** (Associating the letters with the initial consonant sounds) Collect groups of four words, one of which does not begin with the same consonant sound as the others. Pronounce the words in a group, and ask the children to listen closely to tell which one of the words begins with a different sound. Examples are–*big, band, Jimmy, boy; sick, sad, said, toy; men, land, mat, monkey.*

**Exercise 5** (Associating letters with initial consonant sounds) Prepare exercises similar to the following.

Draw a line around each word in the column that begins with the sound at the beginning of the word the teachers says. (use *go, guide, tick* and *taste.)*

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Good | go | Toy | mother |
| Boy | what | Top | team |
| Many | which | Man | took |
| Get | goose | Tan | cat |
| Give | gas | Girl | tap |

**Exercise 6** (Hearing final consonant sounds) Say to the children, "Listen carefully as I say some words we all know. *Pot, cat, cart, sat, fit.* Now listen to their endings as I say them again. *Pot, cat, cart, sat, fit.* What did you notice about the endings of the words?" (Draw from the children the statement that all the words end alike. Say the words again if necessary, being sure to enunciate clearly.)

"Now I'm going to say some other words we know whose endings sound like those of the words we just said. Listen carefully, *Part, dot, flat, cut, cot."*

"This time I will say some words that end like our words ended and some other words that are different. After I say each word, raise your hand if you know whether the ending is the same as or different from the ending in *part."* (Then say the following words, pausing between each to discuss its ending sound.) *Let, mit, by, grit, grab, bit.*

**Exercise 7** (Associating letters with final consonant sounds) Gather pictures of objects known to the children and mount them on cardboard. Be sure that the name of the object ends in a consonant sound and that this final sound is represented by the consonant letter most frequently associated with that sound. Pictures may be similar to the following–*cat, dog, rabbit, ball, hat.* Hold up one of the pictures and ask the children to tell you what it is. Then ask where they hear the sound of _____ in the word, at the beginning or the end. Ask

them finally what letter represents that sound. Do the same for all of the pictures.

## CONSONANT DIGRAPHS

**Exercise 1** The first time a particular consonant digraph is being taught, use words including the consonant digraph which have been taken from the children's reading. List these words on the chalkboard, and have the children say them. Call attention to the initial sounds in the words. Then call attention to the similar letters at the beginning of the words. An example of this procedure in words beginning with the consonant digraph *sh* follows.

Write *ship, shore, shall, shot* and *she* in a column on the chalkboard. "Let's pronounce these words." (Pronounce them or have one say them.) "What sound did you hear at the beginning of each of the words? Did you notice that it was the same sound? Now look at the beginning of each word as we pronounce them again." (As a word is pronounced, draw a line under the *sh* in that word.) "When we hear this sound in a word, it is usually represented by what letters? That's right, *sh*."

(The same approach may be used with other consonant digraphs. A list of words that may be used for others is given below.

*th* – they, the, there, those, this, them
*ch* – chin, children, Charlie, chair, church
*th* – think, thick, thief, thumb, thought

**Exercise 2** Write on the board several columns of words beginning with consonant digraphs. (These may be mimeographed instead.) Ask the pupils to underline the initial letters in each word in the column that represent the same sound. A different child may be asked each time to come to the board and underline the letters after the words are pronounced.

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| the | what | shall | wrote | chin | gnat |
| these | where | should | write | church | gnaw |
| them | when | she | wrong | child | gnarl |
| there | why | shore | wring | chair | gnome |
| this | which | show | wrap | chicken | gnash |

**Exercise 3** Prepare an exercise similar to that of Exercise 2 for words ending in consonant digraphs. Words similar to the following may be used.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| wish | trick | with | ring |
| sash | black | worth | rang |
| wash | clock | math | hang |
| splash | back | myth | going |
| brush | track | path | wrong |

## CONSONANT BLENDS

**Exercise 1** Write the following words in a column on the chalkboard–*blow, blue, black, blade.* "We know each of these words. Let's pronounce them. Jan, you pronounce the first." (Have some other child pronounce the next, and so on.) "I'm going to pronounce them again. Listen carefully to the beginning sound." (Pronounce them distinctly.) "Do you hear the same sound at the beginning of each word? Notice the same two letters at the beginning of each word. When we hear the sound we have in the beginning of these words, usually *bl* are the first two letters of the word." (For emphasis, the teacher may underline *bl* in each word as she pronounces the word.) "You may notice that we say the sounds usually represented by *b* and by *l* very close togehter." (Illustrate.)

The same approach may be used for other consonant blends. Some examples are given below.

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| tree | bring | stop | green | slick | play |
| trip | brought | stair | grow | slap | plan |
| trick | brick | step | grand | slide | plot |
| truck | brown | stem | grit | slim | plow |
| trap | bright | stick | grin | slip | plane |
| track | bread | stand | grind | slid | please |

**Exercise 2** For those children who have difficulty in remembering a particular consonant blend, a list of words beginning with the particular consonant blend may be kept. This practice should be discontinued as soon as the child has mastered that particular blend.

**Exercise 3** Prepare in mimeographed form columns of words beginning with consonant blends. Each column should contain words beginning with a different blend. The children should be asked to pronounce the words and then to underline the initial letters that represent the same sounds. Examples of words are the following.

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| click | blue | draw | stop | flat | train | skip |
| clan | black | drain | stock | flow | trick | skin |
| clock | blow | drip | stick | flew | track | skate |
| clue | block | dry | story | flown | tree | skit |
| cloth | blood | drank | stand | flip | truck | skill |

**Exercise 4** Prepare in mimeographed form sentences similar to those given below. Ask the children to read each sentence and to draw a line under the word below the sentence that belongs in the blank.

a. He played a _____ on Tom.
tick trick track sick

b. The train runs on the _____.
sack trick back track

c. I climbed the _____.
tree tea glee trick

**Exercise 5** Prepare in mimeographed form columns of words ending in consonant blends. Each column should contain words ending with a different blend. Ask the children to underline the final letters that represent the same sounds. Examples of words are the following.

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| best | bird | tank | task | witch | wasp |
| fast | heard | drank | whisk | watch | wisp |
| first | word | blank | frisk | batch | lisp |
| last | curd | think | brisk | wretch | gasp |
| rest | absurd | thank | risk | catch | grasp |

## INITIAL AND FINAL CONSONANT SUBSTITUTIONS

**Exercise 1** (Initial consonant substitution) Write the new word on the chalkboard. Write the known word directly below the new word. Call attention to the similarity of the two words and that they differ only in initial letters. Erase the first letter of the new word and replace it with the first letter of the old word. Have the children pronounce the word. Next erase the letter just subtracted, and replace it with the original initial letter. Follow the same procedure now with the known word, changing it to the new word.

Following is an example of this procedure with the known word *rat* and the unknown word *bat*. Write *bat* on the chalkboard. Then write *rat* underneath it. (Point to *bat*.) "This is one of our new words. Now what is this word?" (Point to *rat*.) "What do you see about these words that is the same?" (Lead them into seeing that, with the exception of the initial letters, the words are the same.) "I'm going to erase the first letter of this word and replace it with an *r*. (Erase the *b* in *bat* and replace it with an *r*.) Now what is the word? Now I'm going to erase the *r* and put in a *b* in its place. What is the word now?"

When the process is completed, and the children appear to understand it, take the word *bat* and make the following words by initial substitutions– *cat, fat, hat, mat, pat, rat, sat.* After each substitution, ask the children to tell you what the word it.

**Exercise 2** (Initial consonant substitution) Write on the chalkboard or mimeograph the following.

Answer these questions.

a. When I replace *b* in *band* with *s*, what is my new word? _____

b. When I replace *b* in *band* with *st*, what is my new word? _____
c. When I replace *b* in *band* with *gr*, what is my new word? _____
d. When I replace *b* in *band* with *h*, what is my new word? _____
e. When I replace *b* in *band* with *l*, what is my new word? _____

**Exercise 3** (Initial consonant substitution) Write on the chalkboard or mimeograph the following.

For each word in column 1, make four new words by replacing the first letter with each letter in column 2.

| | 1 | 2 |
|---|---|---|
| a. | cot | d, g, h, n |
| b. | can | f, m, p, r |
| c. | cat | b, f, h, m |
| d. | sing | k, p, r, w |

**Exercise 4** (Final consonant substitution) Write the new word (as *cart*) on the chalkboard. Write the known word (as *car*) directly below it. Call attention to the similarity of the two words and that they differ only in final letters. Erase the final letter of *cart* and replace it with a *d*. Ask some child to tell you what the word is now. Next, erase the *d* and replace it with *t* in the same word. Ask another child what the word is. Do the same thing with the word *card*, first replacing the *d* with a *t* and then changing it back to a *d*. Give practice with additional words, as *run, rut; fan, fat; flip, flit; tan, tap;* and *man, mat.*

## VOWEL SOUNDS

**Exercise 1** List the following words (known at sight by the children) on the board–*bed, let, sled, red, kept.* "Listen as I say these words. Do you hear a sound that is the same in each of these words? Listen closely as I say them again." (Repeat the words, pronouncing them distinctly.) "That's right, the middle part of each word is the same. Do you see that the same letter is in the middle of each word? When we hear this sound, we call it the short *e* sound. Now give me some other words you know that contain the short *e* sound."

(The same procedure may be used for the other short vowel sounds. It may also be used for the long vowel sounds, but the short sound of the vowel is usually taught before the long sound.)

**Exercise 2** Prepare a sound chart with the children. Either cut out or draw pictures to represent each of the long and short vowel sounds, with the sound to be illustrated in the initial position. These may be pasted (or drawn) on a large chart with the words "long *a*," "short *a*," etc. written by them. Examples may be as follows.

| | |
|---|---|
| Short *a* - Picture of an apple | Long *a* - Picture of an ape |
| Short *e* - Picture of an elephant | Long - Picture of an eel |
| Short *i* - Picture of an Indian | Long *i* - Picture of a cube of ice |
| Short *o* - Picture of an ostrict | Long *o* - Picture of an oak tree |
| Short *u* - Picture of an umpire | Long *u* - Picture of a ukulele |

**Exercise 3** Prepare a cardboard strip containing the vowel letters *a, e, i, o, u, (w), (y). (W* and *y* are written in parentheses because they are not always vowels.) Ask the pupils to tell you what they see on the strip. (These may be written on the board instead of placing them on a strip, but the strip may be posted in the room for future reference if it is used.) A child may say "letters" instead of "vowel letters." If so, agree with him and add that the particular letters also have another name, and that name is "vowel letters." Then tell the children that vowel letters represent many sounds. "Sometimes they are short and sometimes they are long. They have other sounds, also. Now listen and I will help you to hear the short *o* sound. Listen as I say these words– *top, hot, stop."*

Write the words on the board. Ask a child to underline the *o*'s. Next play a listening game in which the children are asked to raise their hands when you say a word which contains the short *o* sound. Words used may be similar to the following–*box, got, fill, knock, bottle, copy, hot, fix, spot, stop, rock.* Insert long *o* words in the list.

**Exercise 4** Ask the children questions which must be answered by words containing short *o* sounds. Briefing for the children may be as follows.

"I am going to ask you some questions. The right answers will be words which have short *o* in them. Now remember that the short *o* sound is like the *o* in *top."*

a. What can a rabbit do? (hop)
b. What tells us the time? (clock)
c. What do we spin? (top)

**Exercise 5** Soon after the short *o* is taught, the long *o* may be taught. Pronounce several words which contain the long *o* sound, and ask the pupils to listen carefully as you pronounce them a second time. "The sound you hear is the long *o* sound. Long *o* says its name, like the *o* in *go*. Now say these words after me -*so, slope, hope, roast, most, spoke.* What sound do you hear in all of these words?"

**Exercise 6** "Write the word in each blank that will complete the sentence. Use words that have long *o* sounds."

a. Bill dug a _____. (hole)
b. In the winter time, we sometimes have _____. (snow)
c. Mother's ring is made of _____. (gold)

**Exercise 7** After the long and short *o* sounds are learned, the diactitical marking for the two sounds may be taught. Explain the *o* with the straight line over it. Then explain the marking of the short *o*. (The short *o* marking varies from dictionary to dictionary. It may have a breve over it, may have no marking at all over it or may be represented by a "double-dotted *a*.") Use the marking on the short vowel sound that is used in the dictionary being used in the classroom or school. Good exercises for teaching the diacritical markings are usually contained within the school editions of dictionaries.

Each of the other vowels may be taught in a similar way. Listed below are suggested words that may be helpful in teaching the other vowels.

| **long a** | **short a** | **long e** | **short e** | **long i** | **short i** | **long u** | **short u** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| able | act | be | bed | hike | bitter | cue | butter |
| acorn | after | bee | belt | pie | dish | cube | bus |
| age | apple | cheese | best | climb | dig | fume | cup |
| wake | at | deep | egg | dime | fifty | cute | hut |
| came | ax | easy | edge | fight | fill | mule | puppy |
| baby | bat | he | neck | find | fish | music | rug |
| cake | pasture | meal | next | five | give | human | tub |
| day | past | meet | pet | ice | ill | use | duck |
| pay | patch | pea | red | mile | mitten | amuse | cut |

| **w as vowel** | **y as vowel (long)** | **y as vowel (short)** |
|---|---|---|
| now | fly | mystery |
| cow | by | myth |
| how | cry | nymph |

## VOWEL DIGRAPHS

**Exercise 1** (Learning that one vowel letter may be silent in vowel digraphs) Put several vowel digraph words on the board. Get them from material the children have just read. Have the children pronounce them. Call attention to the vowel sound by asking if they hear sounds of both vowel letters. State, or have the children state, that when two vowel letters are side by side in a word, one of them may be silent. (Actually, the sound heard is represented by both vowel letters, but this is not usually explained to the children in the initial stages.)

Some words for teaching this are as follows.

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| nail | cream | goat | boast | coat |
| rail | team | need | dream | boat |
| tail | beat | heel | play | float |
| trail | meat | heed | pay | show |
| rain | leap | eat | stay | grow |
| train | seat | each | ray | blow |

**Exercise 2** (See teaching suggestions for vowel principles. One suggestion is given for teaching the "vowel digraph" principle.)

## DIPHTHONGS

**Exercise 1** (Hearing and seeing diphthongs in words) Place several words containing the diphthong to be taught on the board. Be sure to select words that are in the children's sight vocabularies if this is the first attempt to teach this diphthong. Have the children pronounce each word. Ask them to listen carefully for sounds that are the same in each word. Then the teacher pronounces each word distinctly. Ask what letters represent the similar sounds hear. For emphasis, these letters in each word may be underlined. Next list a few more words containing the same diphthong.

Examples of words which may be used are as follows.

| *oi* | *ou* | *ow* |
|---|---|---|
| oil | out | cow |
| coin | our | allow |
| boil | pout | growl |
| toil | loud | crown |
| coil | stout | plow |
| noise | pound | crowd |
| join | found | brow |

**Exercise 2** (Associating diphthongs with letters representing them) Mimeograph or place on the chalkboard the following sentences.

Underline the correct word from among the four choices.

a. The _____walked down the road. (toy, coy, boy, joy)
b. He flipped the _____ into the air. (coin, boil, toil, soil)
c. We went _____the door. (pout, pound, out, stout)
d. The _____ gave a gallon of milk. (sow, allow, plow, cow)

## PHONICS PRINCIPLES

For the reader who needs remedial help, as well as for the child in developmental reading, these skills should not be taught until the child knows the single consonant sounds, consonant digraphs, consonant blends and long and short vowel sounds. Not more than one of the principles should be introduced at one time, and a period of time in which additional opportunities are given for using the principle should elapse before introducing another of the principles. Children can remember these generalizations better if they are led into a discovery of the principles in words that they already know. They should state the principles in their own words.

Teaching suggestions for eight phonics principles listed previously are presented below.

**Exercise 1** In short words or accented syllables containing two vowel letters, one of which is final *e*, and in which the two vowel letters are separated by a single consonant letter, the vowel sound in the word usually is the long sound generally associated with the first vowel letter.

Example: Place in a column on the chalkboard a list of words the children already know that involve this principle. (*gate, cake, these, place, more, fine*) Some of these words should be selected from material the children have just read. Ask them to pronounce each of the words. Next ask what they notice in the words that are similar. They probably will say that all end in the letter *e*. Ask them if they hear a sound for the *e* when the words are pronounced. Next call attention, if the children have not done so, to the long vowel sound represented by the preceding vowel letter. This may be done by having the first word pronounced, then pointing to the first vowel letter and asking if it represents the long or short sound. Repeat the procedure for the remaining words, if necessary. Then ask the children to state the generalization applying to these words in their own words. They may say something like this, "In short words ending in *e* and having another vowel, the *e* doesn't say anything and the other vowel says itself." The principle can be redefined at a later time. Next present several more words to which the generalization applies. Call attention to the "usually," explaining that it doesn't always work but does most of the time. From time to time, review the principle with the children.

Additional Words That May Be Used

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ate | five | like | name | time | line | hide | place | those |
| came | cede | made | ride | game | use | wake | late | nice |
| fine | home | make | take | side | tire | rake | fire | hose |

Additional Practice Exercises

a. Fill in the blanks with the correct word. See how the sound changes when *e* is added.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| at-ate | He _____ his breakfast. | He looked _____ the garden. |
| hid-hide | He _____ in the house. | We will _____ eggs at Easter. |
| us-use | We _____ our time well. | Give _____ our daily bread. |

b. See if you can pronounce these new words. Then let's write a sentence using each one—*drive, hive, cute, stake, rake, flake, Pete, pole, mole, probe.*

**Exercise 2** In short words or accented syllables containing two vowel letters in sequence, the vowel sound usually is the long sound commonly associated with the first vowel letter.

Example: Place in a column on the chalkboard a list of words that the children already know that involve this principle. Be sure to include several words that the children have just had in their reading material. Follow the same procedure outlined for the "final *e*" generalization. (*boat, four, please, train*) Lead children into seeing that two vowel letters are side-by-side, and that the long sound of the first is used in these vowel letter combinations in all of the words. If necessary, questions similar to the following may be used—"How many vowel letters are there in this word? Are the letters side-by-side or separated? What sound do you hear for these two vowel letters?" The same procedure may be used for the remaining words or until some child states the principle. After this is done, ask the children to state in their own words the generalization. Ask them to think of other words they know to which this principle applies. For additional practice, the teacher may write on the board several sentences containing words to which the generalization applies. Children should read the sentences. The teacher then underlines the words to which the principle applies and asks the children to determine whether or not it applies to these words.

Additional Words That May Be Used

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| clean | blow | train | coat | pie | know | meat | plain |
| afraid | near | seem | each | wait | grow | seat | pleat |
| deep | nail | goat | seen | show | leaves | pain | beat |

Additional Practice Exercises

a. Read the sentences and write the missing word on the board. The missing words have vowel digraphs representing long sounds. Select the words from those listed.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| The postman brought our _____. | pain | coat |
| I went to the _____ last night. | shape | wait |
| He asked me to _____ for him. | mail | drive |
| He put on his _____ and hat. | letter | party |
| He was in great _____. | scarf | show |

b. Write list of vowel digraph words on board. Have them pronounced. Then ask children to restate the principle that applies. Use words in sentences.

**Exercise 3** The sound represented by a single vowel letter in a word or accented syllable ending in a consonant is usually short.

Example: Place on the board five or six words to which the principle applies. Be sure several of the words were in material the children have just read and that all are known to the children. (*cut, in, let, can, hat, is, glad*) Call attention to the consonant letter at the end of the word. Then have the word pronounced. Call attention to the short vowel sound. Next ask for children to state the generalization. Give additional practice on other words. If children do not respond readily when they are asked to tell what they see that is similar in the words, the following questions may help. "Does this word end in a vowel or consonant letter? What about the next word? The next? Pronounce the first word. Is the vowel sound long or short? (Point to the vowel letter as this question is asked.) The next? (Do same with remainder of words if necessary.) Now what can you say about short words ending in consonant letters that will help you to pronounce other words when you meet them?" Next give practice on other words to which the principle applies.

Additional Words That May Be Used

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| man | sat | egg | as | when | had | nut | mid | hill |
| last | back | his | wish | milk | fell | an | up | cut |
| let | us | him | ask | on | has | nest | glad | fat |

Additional Practice Exercises

a. Read the sentence and tell what the missing word is. Use words having short vowel sounds and ending in a consonant. Select the words from those listed.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| He slept on the _____. | his | cot |
| _____ is my brother. | her | Bill |
| This is _____ house. | sheet | Dave |
| The dog chased our _____. | cat | geese |

Call attention to the application of the principle to all of these words.

b. Write a list of short vowel, closed syllable words (words ending in consonants) and ask the children to pronounce them. Help them by recalling the principle if they have difficulty with any word. Then write sentences using the words and have the children read the sentences.

**Exercise 4** The sound represented by a single vowel letter in a word or an accented syllable, if it comes at the end of the word or syllable, usually is long.

Example: Place on board in a column five or six words to which the generalization applies. All words should be familiar to the children. (*go, he, no, she, so, by*) Lead them into noting that the words end in vowel letters and that the vowels are long. If needed, the following questions may be useful in leading the

children to discover the principle. "Does the word end in a vowel or a consonant letter? (Do same for all words, if necessary.) Pronounce the first word. Is the vowel a long or short sound? (Point to vowel letter.) (Do same for remaining words.) Now what can you say about short words ending in vowel letters? This will help you to unlock other words you don't know." Give practice on other words to which the principle applies.

Additional Words That May Be Used

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| cry | me | sly | spy | over | able | even | three |
| shy | fly | he | see | open | ago | see | why |
| tree | dry | free | my | paper | also | table | glee |

Additional Practice Exercises

a. After syllabication principles are studied, call attention to the fact that the principle applies to accented syllables in words of more than one syllable. Demonstrate with such words as *music, radio, photograph, holy, deny, ideas, over, paper, able, ago, also, table, even, lady.*

b. Read the sentences and tell what the missing word is. Supply words ending in a vowel letter and having a long vowel sound. Select the words from those listed.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| We _____ home after school. | He | come |
| _____ is my brother. | Bill | go |
| The lake is _____. | to | dry |
| He came _____ the school. | by | full |

Call attention to the application of the principle to all of these words.

c. Write on the board a list of open-syllable words to which the principle applies and ask the children to pronounce them. Recall the principle that applies to the words, and then write sentences using these words. Have the children read them.

**Exercise 5** When a single vowel letter in a word or accented syllable is followed by the letter *r*, the sound of the vowel usually is neither long nor short.

Example: Place in a column on the board five or six words to which the principle applies. All words should be known by the children. (*bird, hard, burn, farm, third, sir, fur*) Lead them into noting that the vowel letters coming before the letter *r* represent sounds different from the long and short sounds of these vowels. Questions that may be used to elicit this generalization from the children are these—"Pronounce the first word. Does this vowel letter stand for the long or short sound? (Point to letter.) No, it is a different sound, isn't it? Now let's look

at the next word. Pronounce it . . . What can we say about the sound represented by vowel letters coming before the *r*? . . . This should help us to pronounce other words." Give practice on other words to which the principle applies.

Additional Words That May Be Used

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| birth | card | dark | fir | for | her | order | stir | warm |
| birthday | care | far | first | girl | horn | part | star | were |
| born | dare | father | or | hard | hurt | party | turn | yard |

Additional Practice Exercises

a. Read the sentence and tell what the missing word is. Each missing word contains a vowel followed by *r*. Select the words from those listed.

Tomorrow Susie will have a _____.
This was my _____ airplane ride.
Give the ball to _____.
A baseball is _____.

hard · test
round party
last her
first him

Call attention to the application of the rule to all these words.

b. Write a list of "r-controlled" words on the board. Ask the children to pronounce them. Recall the principle that applies to the words and then write sentences using these words for the children to read.

**Exercise 6** When *a* is followed by *l*, *w* or *u*, the sound of the vowel usually is neither long nor short and usually has the sound of *au* in *haul*.

Example: Write on the board a column of words to which the principle applies. Make certain the words are already known to the children. (*fall, tall, haul, call, raw, saw*) Have the words pronounced. Call attention or lead the children into seeing that the *a*'s are neither long nor short. Such questions as the following may help. "Pronounce the first word. Does the vowel letter *a* represent the short sound? . . . No, it is neither long nor short. Now let's do the next one . . . Do you notice that the sound is the same when *a* is followed by *l* as it is when it is followed by *w* or *u*? Say that sound. Now let's say in our own words a principle that will help us pronounce words which have *a* followed by *l*, *w* or *u*." Give practice on other words to which the generalization applies.

Additional Words That May Be Used

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| all | cause | walk | balk | almost | although | faucet | jaw |
| ball | saw | wall | draw | already | always | halt | law |
| caught | talk | awe | false | also | awful | haughty | waltz |

Additional Practice Exercises

a. Write a number of *al* (or *au* or *aw*) words on the board. Ask the children to pronounce them. Remind them that the combination of *al* (or *au* or *aw*) frequently represents the sound that it has in these words.

b. Write a paragraph on the board using some new *al, au* and *aw* words. Select words that the children have not met in their reading before but whose meanings they know. Be sure that the other words are known to the children. Have them read the paragraph silently and then ask one of them to read it aloud. Then ask them to help you locate the new words. Underline those and call attention to the sound represented by *al, au* and *aw* in the words. An example is as follows.

John came to a *halt.* He was hot. He turned on the *faucet.* Water poured out. He *caught* some in his hands and drank it. A new car came down the road. He looked in *awe* at the funny front. It looked *awful.* He rested a few minutes and then *walked* on.

**Exercise 7** When *c* precedes *e, i* or *y*, the sound represented by *c* is usually soft (as *s*); in other cases, it is usually hard (as *k*).

Example: List in columnar form on the board five or six "soft *c*" words. *(city, cent, cellar, cypress, circus, circle)* Ask the children to pronounce them. Lead them into noting the *s* sound of *c* and the letters *e, i* or *y*, following *c*. Some questions that may be used to elicit the correct responses are these, "Pronounce the first word. Does the *c* represent an *s* or *k* sound? What letter follows the *c*? (Do the same for all other words and underscore the vowel letter following *c*.) All of these *c*'s are pronounced as *s*. You notice we had *e, i* or *y* following each of the *c*'s. Now let's state a principle that will help us pronounce words beginning with *c* followed by *e, i* or *y*." Give additional practice with other words. Include in the additional list some words that have *c* followed by other vowel letters.

Additional Words That May Be Used

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| cigar | circuit | citrus | cedar | celery | center | cylinder |
| cider | cite | civil | ceiling | cell | cycle | cynic |
| cipher | citizen | cease | celebrate | census | cyclone | cypher |

Additional Practice Exercises

a. List the following words on the board and ask the children to pronounce them. When all the words are pronounced have them draw a circle around each word beginning with the sound. Point out the letters following *c* in

these words and conclude that if *c* is followed by some letter other than *e, i* or *y*, it usually has the *k* sound.

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| cow | cigar | call | cut | cyclone | cylinder | cease |
| city | cent | cell | cot | ceiling | cat | citizen |

b. Write a paragraph in which several soft *c* words are used. Ask the children to read the paragraph silently. Next have one child read it aloud. Then ask the children to help you to locate the words having *c* pronounced as an *s*. Underscore these words. Then review the principle by having one of the children state it. A sample paragraph is as follows.

We went to the *city* to see the *circus*. A clown smoking a *cigar* dived into a net. He was up near the *ceiling* when he jumped. He then rolled a *cylinder* to the *center* of the ring and walked into it.

**Exercise 8** When *g* precedes *e, i* or *y*, the sound represented by *g* is usually soft (as *j*); in other cases, it is usually hard (as *g*).

Example: List in columnar form on the board five or six "soft *g*" words. (*gem, gentlemen, gymnasium, gyp, gist, giraffe*) Ask the children to pronounce them. Lead them into noting the *j* sound of *g* and the *e, i* or *y* followign the *g*. Questions that may be used to elicit the desired responses are these. "Pronounce the first world. Does the sound at the beginning have the *j* or *g* sound? What letter follows the *g*? (Do the same for all other words and underscore the vowel letter following *g*.) All of these *g*'s represent the *j* sound. You notice we had *e, i* or *y* following each of the *g*'s. Now let's state a principle that will help us pronounce words beginning with *g* followed by *e, i* or *y*." Give additional practice with other words. Include in the additional list some words that have *g* followed by other vowel letters.

Additional Words That May Be Used

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| gender | genius | germ | gelatin | ginger | gyroplane |
| general | gentle | German | giblet | gypsy | gymnast |
| generous | geography | Georgia | gin | gyrate | gypsum |

Additional Practice Exercises

a. List the following words on the board and ask the children to pronounce them. When all are pronounced have them draw a circle around each word beginning with the *j* sound. Point out the letters following *g* in these words and conclude that if *g* is followed by some letter other than *e, i* or *y* it usually has the *g* sound.

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| goat | gym | got | go | gentle | Georgia | gyrate |
| gist | gown | German | gap | giblet | garden | gelatin |

b. Write a paragraph in which several soft *g* words are used. Ask the children to read the paragraph silently. Next have one child read it aloud. Then ask the children to help you to locate the words having *g* pronounced as a *j*. Underscore these words. Then review the rule by having a child state it. A sample paragraph is as follows.

I forgot my *gym* shoes yesterday. A *generous* teacher offered to drive me home to get them. On the way to my house, we passed a cotton *gin*. It was September, and the cotton was being *ginned*. I live in *Georgia*, and we grow cotton.

**In Summary** In teaching the phonics principles, the following suggestions are offered.

a. Teach them only to those children who already know common sounds represented by consonant and vowel letters, digraphs and blends.

b. Teach one principle at a time and permit several additional practice periods on the principle before another one is introduced.

c. Begin with the words to which the generalization applies that the children already know at sight. Unknown words to which the principle applies may be introduced as additional practice words.

d. Let the children discover as much as possible about the principle because this aids in retention. If the relationships the teacher wants the child to discover are not discovered, then ask questions that will lead the children into the discovery. If this does not work, as a last resort, point out the relationships.

e. Be sure that the children have any background information needed for understanding a principle, such as long and short vowel sounds. If they do not have this well in hand, take the time to teach it.

f. When lists of words are used, make sentences with some of the words so that the children will not get excessive practice in reading words in isolation.

g. Give frequent reviews on a principle in the beginning. Continue periodic reviews but less frequently after the principle is mastered by the children.

h. Emphasize the "usually" in the principles after the principle is learned. When children bring up exceptions (as *give*—an exception to the soft *g* principle). Explain that all words don't adhere to the principle but that on new words, this is a good first guess. If the guess does not work, the the hard *g* should be used.

i. Always check on meaning. Keep in mind that these principles help in pronunciation and not necessarily meaning—unless children already know the meaing or the context gives it.

j. Teach the principles first as being applicable to one-syllable words. After syllabication and accent have been taught, the rules may be taught as applicable to syllables in words of more than one syllable.

## SYLLABICATION

**Exercise 1** (Hearing syllables in words) Ask the children to listen carefully as the teacher says a word. Start with a single-syllable word. Ask how many parts they hear in the word. Then explain that a syllable is a part we hear in a word. Next illustrate with a two-syllable word. Thereafter, present other one- and two-syllable words, asking each time how many syllables the word contains.

**Exercise 2** (The "double consonant" principle) Place words similar to the following in columnar form on the chalkboard—*perhaps, engine, system, basket, chimney*. (If possible, take words to which the "double consonant" rule applies from something the children have just read.) "Let's pronounce these words. Mary, you tell me what the first one is. What parts did you see and hear in this word? Tell me and I'll write them on the board." (Write *perhaps*.) (Do the same for all of the words in the list—*en-gine, sys-tem, bas-ket, chim-ney*.) "Now look at all of our words. Do you see that we divided our words between consonant letters? You see we have in each word, two consonant letters coming between vowel letters. Now let's try these words—*subject, corner, distance, garden, trumpet*." (Do the same thing with these words.) "Now can you think of a principle that will help you divide other words that have two consonant letters coming between vowel letters?" (Lead the children into stating the generalization in their own words. The children may say something like this, "If you have two consonants coming between vowels in a word, you usually divide the word between the consonants.)

**Exercise 3** (The "single consonant" principle) Place words similar to the following in columnar form on the chalkboard—*vacant, began, even, lazy, lilac*. (If possible, take words to which the "single consonant" principle applies from something the children have just read.) "Let's pronounce these words. John, you tell me the first one. What parts do you see and hear in this word?" (Write *va-cant* on the board as he tells you. Do the same for the remaining words as other children say them—*be-gan, e-ven, la-zy, li-lac*.) "Now look at all of our words. Do you see that we divided our words after a vowel letter and just before a consonant letter? Watch this." (On all of the divided words, place a *v* above the vowel letter just before the division, a *c* above the consonant letter just beyond the divison and a *v* above the second vowel letter. This calls attention to "one consonant between vowel letters.") "Now can you think of a principle that will help you to divide other words that have a single consonant letter coming

between vowel letters?" (Lead the children into stating the generalization in their own words. The children may say something like this, "If you have one consonant coming between vowels in a word, you usually divide the word just before the consonant.")

**Exercise 4** (The *le* principle) Place words of the following type in columnar form on the chalkboard–*maple, table, uncle, circle, sample.* (Select words to which this principle applies from something the children are now reading or have just finished reading.) "Look at these five words. They are words that we know. Bill, say the first one for me. What parts did you see and hear in it?" (As he tells you, write it on the board as *ma-ple*. Do the same as other children read the remaining words–*ta-ble, un-cle, cir-cle, sam-ple.*) "What do you see about all of these words that is the same?" (Draw from the children the fact that they all end in *le*.) Next lead them to see that a consonant letter comes just before *le*. "You see that each of our words ends in *le*, and a consonant letter coming just before *le* is also a part of the last syllable. Can you think of a principle that will help you divide other words with *le* endings preceded by a consonant?" Lead the children into stating the principle in their own words, as, "If you have a word ending in *le* and with a consonant letter coming just before the *le* you usually divide the word just before the consonant. Your last syllable is the consonant plus the *le*."

Later the *ck* exceptions to this generalization may be taught. When the *le* is preceded by *ck*, as in *pickle* and *tickle*, the *le* forms a separate syllable, as *pick-le* and *tick-le*.

**Exercise 5** (Combining the "single consonant" syllabication and the "open syllable" phonics principles) Write the following words on the chalkboard–*vacant, even, lazy, lilac, open.* "Let's pronounce these words. After we pronounce each one, let's divide it into syllables." (Break them into syllables, as *va-cant, e-ven, la-zy, li-lac, o-pen.*) "Take a look at the first syllable of each word, Does it end in a vowel or a consonant letter? Is the sound of the vowel long or short? We see that each of the first syllables ends in a vowel letter, and that the vowel sound is long. Do you remember what we learned earlier about short words ending in vowel letters?" (Have some child review the principle.) "Well, when we have an accented syllable in a longer word, this same principle applies to our accented syllable. We may say now that when we have a short word or an accented syllable containing a single vowel letter which comes at the end of the word or syllable, the sound of the vowel is usually long."

## ACCENT

**Exercise 1** (Hearing accented syllables in words) Select a number of multi-syllabic words which are familiar to the children. As each word is pronounced by the teacher, ask the children to tell how many syllables each word contains. Then have them listen carefully as the words are pornounced again. Ask them to

tell in each word which syllable sounds the strongest. Explain that this is called accent. Give additional practice with other words known to the children.

**Exercise 2** (Teaching the various principles of accent) A particular accent generalization should not be taught until the child meets enough words in his reading to which the principle applies to warrant its being taught. When this occurs, the following general pattern may be used.

List in columnar form several words to which the principle applies. Have the words pronounced, and lead the children into seeing that one particular part of the word (one particular syllable—the first, the last, next to last, etc.) is accented. Then lead the children into seeing the common elements in all of the words (such as each word has two syllables and the first is accented, the root is stressed, etc.) Finally, have the children state the principle that applies to words of this type. An example leading to the generalization that the first syllable usually is accented in words of two syllables is given here.

List the following words on the chalkboard—*happy, Susie, table, finger.*"Let's pronounce each of these words. In the first, on which syllable is the accent? The second? The third? The fourth? You see that each of these words has two syllables in it and that each is accented on the first syllable. Let's try some more words we know." (List on the board others to which the principle applies. Discuss them in the same manner as described above.) "Now can you state a principle that will help you to determine which syllable is accented in two-syllable words?"

CHAPTER 6

# DIFFICULTY LEVELS FOR TEACHING WORD RECOGNITION SKILLS

The classroom teacher needs a blueprint for teaching the word recognition skills. The instructional map should include a sequence for the introduction of skills and some indication of the reading difficulty level at which each skill should be taught. Teachers who use basal readers get such a blueprint from the guidebooks that are designed to be used with the basals. Those who do not use basal readers must have a sequence "built in the teacher" or must find a sequence in some other printed source.

Teacher's guidebooks accompanying basal readers usually offer well-planned sequences for teaching the word recognition skills. The skills outlined in the various series show many similarities, though some differences do exist. The suggested pattern for teaching the skills also differs from series to series in reading levels at which specific skills are introduced. A wide variation is found, for example, in the first use of the skill of substituting initial consonant sounds in a known word to unlock an unknown word. Several basal series begin readiness for this skill at pre-primer level, whereas one series does not suggest work toward this skill until the first semester, second grade reading level.

The teacher who follows the pattern offered in the basal readers being used is likely to introduce all skills. However, he should also make certain that important skills are taught if the series being used omits some he considers to be important.

The reading level at which skills are to be taught is determined in part by the vocabulary used in a series of readers. For example, the phonics principle involving final *e* cannot be taught until several "silent *e*" words are introduced in the selections. The child does not need a generalization which gives him no help in unlocking words. Since the vocabularies vary, the levels for teaching the skills should be expected to vary also from one publisher's material to another. In addition, the philosophy and beliefs of the authors of the materials also influence the sequencing of the skills.

A listing of word recognition skills by reading grade levels is presented below. This particular listing will not coincide exactly with that offered in any reading series now published. It is based upon a study of a number of different series, several lists of skills in textbooks in reading and some ideas of the writer. Its best use to the teacher appears to be for an overview of the skills to be taught. The teacher, however, may need the more detailed breakdown of skills offered in the guidebooks or in other published sources. This chart gives the reading level at which a particular skill is first introduced. It does not indicate whether all parts of the particular skill or group of skills are taught at one reading difficulty level.

For instance, associating initial consonants with sounds they represent in words is listed as beginning at primer level. This process of introducing consonant letters would be distributed from primer through second grade reading difficulty level.

This listing also offers the teacher who is not using basal readers, such as in an individualized reading program, a check list to evaluate the child's knowledge of the word recognition skills. It may also be used as a guide for the preparation of teaching materials. Still another use of the chart is to check the series being used to make certain that all important skills are included some place in the sequence.

These grade levels of materials used in the listing should more accurately be thought of as reading difficulty levels. Each child should be expected to learn those skills on his reading level, not those on his grade placement level. For instance, all children in the second grade should not be expected to learn those skills listed under the second reader level. If a child is reading at a higher level, then skills at a higher difficulty level are more appropriate for him. If he is reading at a lower level, skills at a lower difficulty level are more appropriate for him.

## DIFFICULTY LEVEL RESPONSIBILITIES IN WORD RECOGNITION SKILLS

### Readiness

Using picture clues to meaning
Hearing similarities and differences in words
Seeing similarities and differences in pictures, forms, letters and words
Hearing rhyming sounds in words
Hearing initial consonants in words (*d*og, *t*op)

### Pre-Primer

Practicing skills introduced at lower levels
Expanding skills introduced at lower levels
Building an initial stock of sight words
Using configuration of word to aid in word memory
Using context clues to meaning and pronunciation
Hearing final consonants in words
Learning names of letters
Adding *s* to known noun (boy, boys)
Adding *s* to known verb (jump, jumps)

### Primer

Practicing skills introduced at lower levels
Expanding skills introduced at lower levels

Associating initial consonant letters with sounds they represent in words
Associating final consonant letters with sounds they represent in words (ba*t*, ma*n*)
Associating consonant digraphs (*th*e, *sh*all) with sounds they represent in words
Adding *ed* to verb (jump, jump*ed*)
Adding *'s* to noun (Bill, Bill*'s*)
Adding *ing* to verb (go, go*ing*)
Associating initial consonant blends (*bl*ue, *tr*ee) with sounds they represent in words
Recognizing compound words (cowboy)
Recognizing contractions (don't)
Using initial consonant substitutions (Substitute *b* for *l* in known word *like*, get *bike*)

**First Reader**

Practicing skills introduced at lower levels
Expanding skills introduced at lower levels
Using final consonant substitution (Substitute *d* for *t* in known word *pat*, get *pad*)
Associating final consonant digraphs (wi*th*, ri*ng*) with sounds they represent in words
Associating vowel letters with short vowel sounds
Associating vowel letters with long vowel sounds
Associating final consonant blends (bi*rd*, whi*sk*) with sounds they represent in words
Understanding "final *e*" generalization
Understanding "*r* controller" generalization

**Second Reader, First Semester**

Practicing skills introduced at lower levels
Expanding skills introduced at lower levels
Understanding "*a* before *l*, *u* or *w*" generalization
Using simple suffixes (love*ly*, snow*y*)
Associating diphthongs (*oi*l, bo*y*) with sound they represent in words
Alphabetizing by first letters
Associating vowel digraphs (go*a*t, tra*i*l) with sounds they represent in words
Understanding "vowel digraph" generalization
Understanding "ending consonant" generalization
Understanding "ending vowel" generalization
Understanding consonant may be doubled before adding ending (*hop*, *hopped*)

Understanding *y* may be changed to *i* before ending is added (sk*y*, sk*ies*)
Understanding *e* may be dropped before ending is added *(hope, hoping)*

**Second Reader, Second Semester**

Practicing skills introduced at lower levels
Expanding skills introduced at lower levels
Understanding "soft *c*" generalization
Understanding "soft *g*" generalization
Hearing syllables
Hearing accent in words
Understanding that phonics principles apply to vowels in accented syllables
Understanding double consonant syllabication principle
Using simple prefixes (*re*turn, *un*happy)
Locating root words
Alphabetizing by first and second letters

**Third Reader, First Semester**

Practicing skills introduced at lower levels
Expanding skills introduced at lower levels
Understanding vowel-consonant-vowel syllabication principle
Understanding *le* syllabication principle
Understanding that *f* may be changed to *v* before ending is added (*leaf, leaves*)
Alphabetizing by first, second and third letters
Understanding the purpose of and using guide words in dictionary and glossary
Selecting correct definition from among those given in dictionary and glossary
Knowing how to open dictionary efficiently
Using diacritical markings
Using pronunciation key in dictionary
Using pronunciation spellings in dictionary

**Third Reader, Second Semester**

Practicing skills introduced at lower levels
Expanding skills introduced at lower levels
Knowing and using accent marks in glossary and dictionary
Knowing how to decide correct entry word in cases of inflected and derived forms of words

CHAPTER 7

# TEACHING WORD RECOGNITION SKILLS WHEN BASAL READERS ARE USED

Instruction in word recognition skills is usually planned as a part of the regular developmental reading program, and much of this instruction in elementary schools centers around basal readers. In addition, teachers also work on word recognition as a part of instruction in grammar and spelling.

## AN EXAMPLE

To illustrate how word recognition instruction fits into the regular basal or develomental reading period, an example at second grade level will be cited. The teacher, in a self-contained classroom, groups for reading instruction. Each day approximately 25 to 30 minutes are spent in working directly with each of three groups, and members of the groups not working directly with the teacher spend about 50 to 60 additional minutes on reading activities. Thus each child has approximately one and one-fourth to one and one-half hours of reading instruction each day. Children in the various groups are reading in texts on different levels and are taught skills appropriate to their reading levels. Pupils in the lowest group are instructed in a first reader, those in the middle group in a first semester, second grade reader and those in the top group in a second semester, second grade reader.

The same lesson pattern is used for each of the three groups. However, what the teacher does within that pattern varies considerably from selection to selection. For each selection taught, the pattern below may be used. The first three phrases presented here usually are followed in the order given, but the other phases often are not.

a. **Developing readiness for the selection** The teacher helps the children to understand the meaning of any difficult words to be introduced in the selection. The necessary background needed for understanding the selection is also developed, and an attempt is made to get the children interested in the content. Phase 1 concludes by establishing a purpose for the initial reading of the selection.

b. **Silent reading of the selection or part of the selection** At this point the children read the selection with the teacher standing by to aid them with any word recognition problems. The teacher tells the children the words on which they request help unless they can be reminded quickly of some clue they can use to unlock the word for themselves. Whatever help the teacher gives should interfere as little as possible with the children's train of thought as they read the selection. Major work on word recognition is reserved for a later phase.

c. **Comprehension check and skill building** The selection is discussed in this phase, with the teacher asking questions to bring out important points. Comprehension skills are also taught.

d. **Word recognition skill building** The teacher introduces new word recognition skills and give practice on skills introduced previously. Including the word recognition skill instruction at this point permits the introduction of new skills with words which the children have just met in their reading.

e. **Re-reading with some different purpose in mind** The children next read the selection (or part of the selection) again with some different purpose in mind. Sometimes they read orally, sometimes silently. The teacher varies the nature of the re-reading in terms of the purposes it is to serve.

f. **Follow-up activities** Often, in the nature of follow-up work, the children do additional reading in library or other books on topics growing out of the selection. They frequently are given additional practice on word recognition skills previously introduced. Workbooks or prepared exercises, small group activity or individual work assignments may be used in this phase.

The basal readers are distributed to the children when they actually need to work in them. They are taken up when the children have finished the assignment.

The major work on word recognition occurred in phases four and six, as the above pattern was followed. In addition, a readiness for the word recognition work was developed in phase one. This included building an expectancy for meeting some of the new words in context and building an understanding of words thought to be difficult for the children. (A few of the guidebooks accompanying basal readers offer suggestions for more word recognition work in the first phase than the above pattern suggests.)

In working with one of the several groups he has in his classroom, a teacher may follow the lesson plan at the following pace.

First day
- Build readiness for the selection (Phase 1)
- Silent reading of the selection (Phase 2)
- Comprehension check and skill building (Phase 3)

Second day
- Review the story quickly
- Complete comprehension skill building (Phase 3)
- Word recognition skill building (phase 4)
- Re-reading for later oral reading (Phase 5)

Third day — Oral reading of parts of selection (Related to Phase 5)
Workbook exercise on word recognition skill building (Phase 6)
Recreational reading when finished (Phase 6)
Discussion of errors on workbook exercise (Phase 6)

The above schedule shows the teaching of a selection extending over a three-day period. Some selections may take as little as two days; others may take much longer if the load of skill instruction is heavy or the selection is quite long. The teacher should take as much time as is necessary to give adequate attention to skill building, since a major purpose of developmental reading is to teach basal skills of reading.

Some basal readers contain selections which are longer than those of others. The longer selections often will need to be broken into parts for instructional purposes, and some guidebooks suggest appropriate divisions to be made.

## USING THE GUIDEBOOK

The teacher usually follows the suggestions in the teacher's guidebook for the sequence of skills because he knows words are included in the selection that may be used for teaching the skill the guidebook suggests. The lesson plan pattern may vary from that offered above, but most guidebooks offer plans very similar to it. The teacher uses the guidebook but deviates from its suggestions when deviation will improve instruction.

## SEQUENTIAL DEVELOPMENT OF SKILLS

The development of word recognition skills should be sequential. Lower level skills prepare the reader for the learning of higher order skills. A child often builds up some skill or understanding through work distributed throughout several difficulty levels, as from pre-primer through second semester, second grade level. The guidebooks accompanying the basal readers in most instances offer well-worked-out sequences for teaching the skills. The chart introduced in Chapter 6 also represents a sequence which may be followed.

CHAPTER 8

# DETERMINING THE INSTRUCTIONAL LEVEL

Instruction in word recognition often is doomed to failure from the beginning for some children because the materials used for instruction are much too difficult for those children. If word recognition skills are to be taught effectively, they must be taught in materials easy enough for the child to read successfully and yet difficult enough to challenge him. Many informal reading inventories have been prepared to help teachers determine the suitability of reading materials for instructional purposes. The inventory described here is one that may be used by any classroom teacher.

## AN INFORMAL READING INVENTORY

An informal reading inventory permits the teacher to assess the child's reading strengths and weaknesses as he reads in graded texts. A check is made of both word recognition and comprehension. The child tries the book on for size as he would a pair of shoes. The level at which the book "fits" is the instructional level in reading, that level at which the child should be instructed under teacher guidance.

This procedure, though not an exact measure of the child's reading, offers more useful information in a short period of time than can usually be obtained from several standardized reading tests. The teacher observes the child actually working in books being considered for use in his instruction.

**Materials needed** A series of graded textbooks in reading and questions prepared on a part of a story from each book in the series are needed.

**Choosing the selections** The selection to be used in each book should be located between pages 20 and 40 in order to avoid getting selections that are too easy or too hard. It should also contain at least 100 words.

**Preparing the questions** Questions should be prepared in multiples of four for ease in scoring. At first grade reading level, four questions are usually appropriate. Eight questions—sometimes twelve, depending upon the selection—are usually used at higher reading levels.

Questions should be aimed not only at retention of facts but also at "thinking with the facts." "How do you suppose Uncle Jim felt when Tommy pushed him into the circle?" "What do you think Uncle Jim then did to Tommy? Why do you answer as you do?" "Why did Sarah say she really did not want to go to the party?" In these questions, the exact answers were not given in the text. Approximately one-fourth of the questions prepared on each selection should be of this type.

Teacher judgment is important in preparing good questions. The examiner must consider whether points selected for questioning are among the main ideas of the selection. He must also avoid use of unimportant details as bases of questions. Sets of questions on the books to be used should be prepared and revised as use proves certain of them to be inappropriate. Once the teacher has prepared a good set of questions, he may use them again and again with different children. Several teachers in a school may also cooperate in the preparation of questions.

## CRITERIA FOR SUCCESS

After silent reading of the selection, the child should be able to comprehend at least three-fourths of the main ideas contained within the selection (answer three-fourths of the questions correctly). He should miss not more than one in each twenty words in the materials read. This word recognition count is based upon words on which the child requests help as he reads silently and on words he misses in reading the same selection orally. In getting this total, proper names and repeated misses are not counted. If the child misses the same word both in silent and in oral reading, it is counted only one time. The instructional level is the highest level at which the child meets both criteria for success described here. For example, if the child reads a second semester, second grade selection containing 123 words, asks help on two words (neither of them proper names nor repeats) in his silent reading, answers seven of eight questions correctly and misses five additional words in his oral reading (none of them proper names or repeats of two words previously missed in silent reading or oral reading), the material is too difficult for him. He has missed seven words when the "one in twenty" criterion permits six of the 123 words to be missed. If he passed the level just below this one (first semester, second grade), then that level would be considered his instructional level.

Sometimes the child meets the two criteria for success at a given level and still the teacher feels that a lower level is more appropriate for instructional purposes. A lower level is more appropriate when the child shows excessive symptons of poor reading even though he comprehends three-fourths of the main ideas and does not miss more than one in twenty words. For example, extreme tenseness in oral reading and continual whispering in silent reading at the highest level at which the child succeeded would indicate that a lower level should be used for instruction.

When teachers are faced with a choice between two levels, they should in most instances decide upon the lower level. If after a few days of instruction they find they have made an incorrect choice, they may shift the child to a more appropriate level.

## THE STARTING LEVEL

The level at which the inventory is started must be left to teacher judgment. The

teacher wants, if possible, to get a level at which the child can meet both criteria for success for the first book. When the teacher knows the last level at which the child is instructed, that level often is an appropriate beginning point. The teacher always shifts to a lower level when he finds that the first level used is too difficult.

## THE SERIES TO BE USED

If the teacher is attempting to determine the book in which the child should be instructed in the classroom, then the books to be used are those he will actually use in his reading groups. Under such circumstances, the series is probably a familiar series for the child. However, if the purpose is to estimate the child's general level of reading, possibly for planning remedial work for a poor reader or for enrichment reading for an excellent reader, a series unknown to the pupil may be used.

## PUPILS FOR WHOM INVENTORY IS TO BE USED

All pupils in a classroom would not need an informal inventory. The inventory should be given to those children about whose reading instructional levels the teacher in in doubt. At the beginning of the year it may be used to help in grouping children for instruction when the teacher does not have sufficient information about some of the children. It also is useful in determining the level on which the child may be instructed in remedial work.

## WHEN TO GIVE IT

Whenever the teacher can arrange his schedule so that he may have the other pupils in the room working independently, he may work directly with a child for the 20 to 25 minutes necessary for the inventory. (An experienced person usually can administer the inventory in a shorter period of time.) During the first two weeks of school, a part of the reading period may be used for such evaluation.

## PROCEDURES FOR ADMINISTRATION

The administration procedure for a given book within the series is as follows.

STEP I "Read this selection from the beginning of the story to the end of paragraph . Read it silently, and I shall ask you questions about it when you have finished. If you need to help on any words, I'll help you with them."

As the child reads, the teacher notes and records any symptons of poor reading (such as lip movements, whispering, pointing, head movements and tenseness). He also gives any help the child requests on word pronunciation and records the words on which help was given.

STEP II After removing the book, the teacher asks the comprehensions questions. Responses are recorded as pass or fail.

STEP III The child is asked to read the same selection orally. The teacher records again any symptons of poor reading and also the words mispronounced by the child.

If the criteria for success are met in the first book used, then the next higher level should be tried. One or more levels may be skipped in the next trial if the material just tried appears to be extremely easy. If the criteria for success are not met, then the next lower level is used.

The child must read in at least one book at which he meets both criteria for success and must read in one book at which he fails one or both of the criteria for success.

The same procedure is used in introducing the selection and scoring the performance in each book.

## UNIQUE FEATURE OF THIS INVENTORY

One feature of this inventory differs from most inventories recommended for teacher use. The teacher, in using this inventory, has the child read a selection silently before he is asked to read orally. In teaching basal reading, reading specialists recommend strongly that children be given an opportunity to read silently any material they later will read orally. If such a procedure is important in instruction, then it would appear to be equally important in selecting material to be used for instructional purposes.

## INFORMAL READING INVENTORY RECORD FORM

A record form has been prepared to aid the examiner in recording the results of the informal reading inventory. All records should be kept on this form, which is reproduced at the end of this chapter. It may be duplicated for teacher use. One sheet will usually be sufficient for a child since up to four trials may be recorded on one form. If five or more levels are used, a second copy of the form is necessary.

To help the reader become oriented to the inventory record form, each section will be discussed. It will be noted that the top two lines consist of identifying data. The remaining parts of the form are labeled alphabetically, except for the space for the examiner to enter his own name.

The examiner should fill in as much of the identifying information in the top two lines as he can at the beginning of the inventory. The name of the pupil, the date, the series of textbooks being used and the difficulty level of the book to be

used as the first trial can all be written in before the inventory is started. The examiner should be certain to record accurately the difficulty levels used at each trial. In the blank opposite number 1 should be entered the difficulty level (as $3^2$ for third grade, second semester) of the first book tried. Each time, as a new level is tried, the difficulty level of the book should be entered.

**A. Words asked during silent reading** As the child asks for help on a word, the examiner records that word in the appropriate space. Words asked on the first book used are recorded on the "Trial 1" space, and so on. These words are counted later and entered in Section C. If no words are asked, "NONE" in large letters is written in the space.

**B. Words missed in oral reading** When the child is reading the selection orally (after the comprehension check), the examiner records words on which he requests help and words mispronounced. The examiner may put what the child called the mispronounced word in parentheses following the word. If the child omits a word, the word is entered and an "O" is put in parentheses following the word. If the child adds a word, the word is entered and an "A" is put in parentheses following the word. Circumstances under which omitted and added words are to be counted in the total words missed will be discussed in Section C. These words will, however, always be recorded under Section B. The examiner should make certain to enter the words missed in oral reading under the appropriate trial. If no words are missed, he will write "NONE" in large letters.

**C. Summary of word recognition** At the end of the trial, the examiner enters (1) the number of words in the selection (taken from a count of the words), (2) the silent words asked (taken from Section A, counting repeated misses only one time, and not counting proper names), (3) oral words asked (taken from Section B, counting repeated misses only one time, not counting proper names and omitting words previously recorded under silent words missed), (4) total words missed (obtained by adding silent words missed and oral words missed–if duplicate misses were eliminated before recording number of oral words missed–that is, eliminating from the number of oral words missed any words that were previously missed in silent reading). If the total words missed is not more than 1 in 20, then "S" will be circled. If the total words missed is more than 1 in 20, then "P" will be circled.

The examiner must decide whether to count additions and omissions in the words missed. If the word added or omitted is an inconsequential word, such as *a, an* or *the*, and really makes no difference, it should not be counted. It should be entered under Section B, but a line should be drawn through it to indicate that it is unimportant in this setting. If the word added or omitted changes the meaning in any way, count it as a missed word.

In order to keep from counting the same word more than once in getting the total, it is a good practice to go through Sections A and B and draw light pencil

lines through repeated words. For instance, if *thought* is recorded twice under Trial 1 in Section A and once under Trial 1 in Section B, then the second listing in Section A and the listing in Section B should be crossed out by means of a line drawn through the word. This will remind the examiner to count it once only in his totals. A line may also be drawn through a proper name as a reminder not to include it in the totals.

**D. Comprehension after silent reading** The examiner enters a plus for each correct answer and a minus for each incorrect answer. When the questions are all answered, he will circle "S" if as many as 3 of 4 or 6 of 8 questions are anwered correctly. He will circle "P," indicating "poor," if the criterion of "75 percent comprehension" is not met.

**E. Silent reading check list** The examiner checks each sympton of poor reading as he noted it during the silent reading of a selection. It is important to check each sympton under the correct trial because some symptons may be in evidence at one level but not at another.

**F. Oral reading check list** Before moving to another book, the examiner should check the symptons of poor reading noted in the child's oral reading. Again, it is important to check the symptons in the appropriate column. For instance, "tense or nervous" may be checked only on the failing level, where material is too difficult, and the examiner needs to be able to tell this when he looks, perhaps several days later, at the inventory form.

**G. Instructional level** The examiner should enter the instructional level in the blank provided. The instructional level is the highest level at which both criteria for success are met. Sometimes, because of excessive faulty reading habits or symptons, the examiner may drop to a lower level for the recommended instructional level.

**H. Notes on word attack** The examiner should make abbreviated notes on anything discovered about the child's word attack skills. Comments such as these may be made; "leaves off word endings," "appears to break words into syllables," "spells all words," "confuses similar looking words" and "repeated several phonics principles as he tried to pronounce a silent *e* word."

## A Check List

Name _____ Date _____

Series _____ Trial Levels 1 ____ , 2 ____ , 3 ____ , 4 ____

A WORDS ASKED DURING SILENT READING

| Trial 1 | Trial 2 | Trial 3 | Trial 4 |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | |

B WORDS MISSED IN ORAL READING

| Trial 1 | Trial 2 | Trial 3 | Trial 4 |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | |

C SUMMARY OF WORD RECOGNITION

| | Trial 1 | Trial 2 | Trial 3 | Trial 4 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Words in selection | | | | |
| Silent words asked | | | | |
| Oral words missed | | | | |
| TOTAL WORDS MISSED | | | | |
| Satis. or Poor | S P | S P | S P | S P |

D COMPREHENSION AFTER SILENT READ

| Trial 1 | Trial 2 | Trial 3 | Trial 4 |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 |
| 6 | 6 | 6 | 6 |
| 7 | 7 | 7 | 7 |
| 8 | 8 | 8 | 8 |
| S P | S P | S P | S P |

E SILENT READING CHECK LIST

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | Moves lips, no sound |
| | | | | Whispers |
| | | | | Points at words |
| | | | | Book held too close |
| | | | | Book held too far away |
| | | | | Appears tense |
| | | | | Moves head |
| | | | | Reads slowly |

F ORAL READING CHECK LIST

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | Word-by-word reader |
| | | | | Inappropriate phrasing |
| | | | | Ignores punctuation |
| | | | | Many mispronunciations |
| | | | | Faulty enunciation |
| | | | | Monotonous voice |
| | | | | High-pitched voice |
| | | | | Tense or nervous |
| | | | | Excessive repetitions |
| | | | | Loses place |
| | | | | Poor sight vocabulary |
| | | | | Context guesses wrong |
| | | | | Poor word attack skills |
| | | | | Reads slowly |
| | | | | Skips words |
| | | | | Adds words |
| | | | | Reads too fast |
| | | | | Unknown words not tried |

G INSTRUCTIONAL LEVEL _____

H NOTES ON WORD ATTACK

Examiner _____

CHAPTER 9

## SUMMARY COMMENTS ON WORD RECOGNITION SKILLS

Among the most important ideas in teaching word recognition skills are the following.

- The teacher should aim toward developing a reader who knows a variety of techniques for recognizing words and who puts into practice whatever techniques appear appropriate for attacking any unknown word he encounters.
- In attacking unknown words, the child may use several techniques together, such a syllabication, phonics and context clues.
- By the time the child has mastered third grade difficulty level skills, he should have a good background for attacking unknown words. At higher levels, though, these skills should be reviewed and applied to more complex materials.
- Instructional materials should be on the child's reading level if effective word recognition instruction is to occur.
- Teacher's guidebooks accompanying reading texts are good sources for sequence for teaching the word attack skills.
- Guidebooks offer good suggestions for teaching word recognition skills, but some children do not need all of the suggestions offered; other children will need even more than will be offered in the guidebooks. The teacher deviates when deviation from the lesson plan in the guidebook makes the lesson more effective. The more experienced the teacher is, the less he will be dependent upon the guidebook, though experienced teachers still use the guidebook.
- Adequate time should be taken in the basal reading periods to develop the word recognition techniques. Completing a selection a day usually will not give the teacher as much time as is needed to develop these skills. Several days often will be needed on each selection.
- The first introduction to a skill should be in words taken from something the child has just read. Whenever possible, word recognition instruction should grow out of something the child has read recently.
- The word recognition skill or understanding being taught should usually be introduced in known words first. The next step is to move into use of that skill or understanding in unlocking unknown words.
- After the introduction of a skill, the teacher should plan for periodic practice of that skill to insure mastery.
- Practice on skill in isolation from actual reading should be held to a minimum. When words are removed from context for practice, they should usually be put back into context before the practice session is over, i.e., close the session by having the words read in sentences.

- When word games are used, practice sessions should be short in order for efficient learning to occur. Provisions should be made for children to meet immediately in sentences and paragraphs the words used in the word game.
- If children do not have lower level skills necessary for an understanding of a principle to be taught, the lower level skills should be taught to make ready for the higher order skill. For instance, before extending the "silent *e*" generalization to words of more than one syllable, the child must be taught the principles of syllabication and accent.
- The short sound of a vowel is usually taught before the long sound.
- Examples used in teaching the short vowel sounds should be words pronounced accurately in the community in which the teaching occurs. For instance, the word *pet* would be much better than the word *pen* as an example of the short *e* sound in the Southeast. Often *pen* (short *e*) is pronounced like *pin* (short *i*); *home*, which should be pronounced with a long *o* sound, often is given an *o* sound which is neither long nor short.
- All dictionaries do not use the same diacritical markings. The teacher needs to study carefully the markings used in the dictionaries in his classroom before teaching these markings to children.

## SOURCES FOR FURTHER READING

Bailey, M. H. The utility of phonic generalizations in grades one through six. **The Reading Teacher**, 1967, 20 413-418.

Clymer, T. The utility of phonic generalizations in the primary grades. **The Reading Teacher**, 1963, 16, 252-258.

Durkin, D. **Phonics and the teaching of reading.** New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1962.

Emans, R. The usefulness of phonic generalizations above the primary grades. **The Reading Teacher**, 1967, 20 419-425.

Fries, C.C. **Linguistics and reading.** New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1962.

Heilman, A. W. **Phonics in proper perspective.** (2nd Ed.) Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill, 1969.

## A LIST OF WORD RECOGNITION TERMS

The word recognition vocabulary used in this bulletin is defined here. In addition, a few words or terms frequently used in discussions of word recognition, though not used in this publication, are included. Definitions in some instances are incomplete. Included here is what usually is meant when the word or term is used.

**Accent** Stress. Relative emphasis given a word or a syllable in a word or a syllable in a word when it is spoken.

**Accented Syllable** A stressed syllable in a word. Syllable which is emphasized, as BA-by in the word *baby*. May stress more than one syllable, with one accented syllable being given the primary accent and the other stressed syllable the secondary accent. (In *decoration*, primary accent on third syllable, secondary accent on first. DEC-o-RA-tion).

**Auditory Discrimination** Recognizing likenesses and differences in sounds.

**Auditory Perception** Awareness of sounds. Hearing sounds, as likenesses and differences in words.

**Blending** Putting syllables together into a word, putting a letter or letters with parts of a word to make a new word. May be auditory and/or visual.

**Bound Morpheme** A morpheme that must combine with another morpheme (as *s* in *boys*).

**Stem** The base of a derived or inflected form of a word. May or may not be identical with root. Examples—In word *lovely*, *love* is the stem. In word *cries*, *cri* is the stem.

**Structural Analysis** Analyzing a word in terms of its structure. Makes use of syllabication, inflected forms of words, derived forms of words, contractions and compound words for recognition clues. Same as word structure clues. Meaning elements in words.

**Structure Words** Words that, when standing alone, convey very little referential meaning (*am, who, a, one, if*). Words that serve as clues to words that follow. Sometimes called service words.

**Syllabication** Breaking words into syllables. Breaking words into the parts seen and heard in the words.

**Syllabication Principles** Generalizations taught to guide the reader in dividing words into syllables.

**Syllable** A pronunciation unit. An uninterrupted unit in pronunciation. A part seen and/or heard in a word. At least one vowel letter in each syllable in a printed word; at least one vowel sound in each syllable of a spoken word.

**Syntax** Patterns of word in phrases, clauses and sentences. Sometimes term used to include patterns of morphemes in words.

**Visual Discrimination** Recognizing likenesses and differences in visual symbols.

**Visual Perception** Awareness of that which is seen. Act of seeing likenesses and differences in forms, objects, letters and words.

**Vowel** Sound which is made openly, with no obstruction of the flow of breath as the sound is being uttered.

**Vowel Digraph** Two vowel letters representing one speech sound. Examples—*oa* in *boat*, *ai* in *nail*, *ee* in *feed*, *ie* in *yield*.

**Vowel Letter** Letter representing a vowel sound. Vowel letters include *a, e, i, o* and *u*. The letters *w* (as in *cow*) and *y* (as in *city*) may also be used as vowel letters in some words.

**Word Analysis** Process of analyzing words in terms of their sound elements and structure in order to recognize the words.

**Word Attack** The process of unlocking or recognizing unknown words. Same as "word perception" or "word recognition."

**Word Form Clue** The general form of a word which may serve as an aid in recognizing the word. Sometimes used to mean the same as consonant substitution for word recognition (as recognizing *tan* because of its similarity to the known word *ran*). Occasionally includes configuration clues, as used by some writers.

**Word Identification** Sometimes meaning restricted to unlocking unknown words. Used interchangably with "word recognition" in this publication, thus including the recall of known words as well as unlocking unknown words.

**Word Perception** Same as "word recognition" and "word attack."

**Word Recognition** The process of unlocking unknown and recalling known words by means of all of the techniques discussed in this bulletin. These include sight vocabulary, phonics, word structure, context clues and dictionary use.

**Word Structure** The form of the word. Includes syllabication, root and stem of words, added prefixes and suffixes, compound words and contractions.

**Word Structure Clue** Any structural aspect of a word including familiar syllables, affixes, etc., which aids in recognition of the word.